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Modern Sermons by World Scholars

VOLUME VIII

RADFORD TO SELBIE

MODERN SERMONS
BY
WORLD SCHOLARS

EDITED BY
ROBERT SCOTT AND WILLIAM C. STILES
Editors of *The Homiletic Review*

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Hurst Memorial Library
Pacific Christian College
Long Beach, Calif.

IN TEN VOLUMES
VOLUME VIII—RADFORD TO SELBIE

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RADFORD

CHRISTIAN PERSONALITY

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CHRISTIAN PERSONALITY

The Rev. Lewis B. Radford, M.A.

"And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Thess. 5 : 23 (R. V.).

When the history of the thought of our day comes to be written, its characteristic note will probably be found to be that of personality. Psychology, the study of personality, has thrown a new light upon the child as he sits before his teacher or plays about at home. It has thrown a new light upon the patient on the sick bed, and set the physician studying him as a living whole and not merely as a case of some particular malady. It has given the Christian Scientist the one solid piece of truth in his strange gospel; for Christian Science is a nemesis upon the neglect of the truth that will and faith have powers over the material which cannot be lightly dismissed nor safely ignored. It has claimed its place in theology, and already created there a new literature, in which the analysis of the religious experience of the individual is beginning to yield fresh evidence of the unseen. At the same time even the conflict of ideals in Church life and the problems

of Church order and work are ceasing to fill the view or to retain their hold upon the minds of men as mysticism steadily forces its way to the front. People who know nothing of the vocabulary of psychology as a science eagerly read and discuss the working of the Spirit of God upon the souls of men in a Welsh revival or a diocesan convention, or in the lives of the saints, from Augustine to Brother Lawrence. Even now we are but at the beginning. Psychology has a work to do yet in the reconciliation of apparent antagonists. It seems as though psychology were to be the middle term between science and theology. In method it is a science, in subject matter it is part of the study of religion. Romanes came to the conclusion that the two questions which call for investigation at bottom as between science and theology are the nature of causation and the nature of faith.[1] Sir Oliver Lodge says now that the controversy between the scientific and the religious conceptions of the universe hinges upon the question of the efficacy of prayer.[2] But what are the elements of prayer but the will of God and the will of man—the very things which Romanes called causation and faith? Both of them are psychological questions from one point of view. And as between scientist and

[1] "Thoughts on Religion" (ed. Gore, 1902), p. 115.
[2] "Ideals of Science and Faith."

theologian, so between theologian and theologian. On the one hand we are being told, and we hear it with relief and hope, that different types of eucharistic doctrine will come together over the deeper study of what is meant by faith; and on the other hand the doctrine of the atonement loses much of what it is often misunderstood to mean when we are set to consider it in relation to personality, as the work of the Savior passes into the life of man through the work of the Holy Spirit. So, too, men who found the doctrine of the Trinity not only mysterious but irrational when they thought of personality in the old way as something isolated and self-complete, are beginning to see a little way further into the heart of the mystery when they grasp the newer and more scientific idea of personality as something which only finds itself to the full in union with other beings.

But it is the more intensely personal aspects of personality to which I would call your attention. Psychology as a science has passed in a sense from the inorganic to the organic, from statics to dynamics. It is the live man that we study now, and not merely his mental machinery. So here it is to your own personality as a living thing that I ask you to look. Life is so full of work and pleasure that we are in grave danger of living too much on our own doorstep or at the window or in the street, and so growing up strangers to the man inside.

Yet Elijah was recalled from the wind and the fire and the earthquake to the still small voice. It was in the wilderness that our Lord realized to the full that consciousness of divine power which brought Him so near at once to the Father and to the tempter. It was in Arabia that Paul found himself and his mission. We, too, must take and make opportunities for spending time alone. We must seek our own company, tremble perhaps with joy, perhaps with fear, as we feel the man that is awakening to the man that is to be. Only so can we learn to pray instead of merely saying our prayers. Only so can we see whither we are going, and what we are called to do. Only so can we meet the messenger of God with whom we must wrestle before the low aim of a Jacob can give place to the nobler strength of an Israel.

Let us look now at the prayer in our text. The apostle prays first that God may sanctify his hearers wholly (ὁλοτελεῖς). The whole man is to come to the perfection of holiness. His personality is to be guarded and guided to its true end. Then the apostle prays that body, soul and spirit may be kept entire (ὁλόκληρον) and blameless. Each part of the threefold nature in which personality finds an abode and an expression is to be preserved unimpaired and untainted. The first petition is for the perfection of the whole man, the second is for his completeness in every part. The unity in

trinity and the trinity in unity of human nature are alike sacred principles to be maintained.

We are bidden then—for it should be a point of holy honor to strive after the thing we pray for—to treasure and train our own personality—treasure and train, for it is both a trust to keep and a prize to win. It is a trust to keep. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. 4 : 23), ran the proverb. "For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8 : 36), runs the Lord's own warning.

First, we are to keep the soul pure. Nothing can compensate for the loss of that purity. Not all the wealth of knowledge, not all the skill of a trained intellect, not all the delicacy of a refined taste can give what is promised to purity alone. The time will come when we shall want to see God; and if now we first listen and then welcome and then look for all that turns God's gifts into the devil's poison, we may perhaps never be swept into doing the accursed thing, or betrayed into saying the foul word, but we shall find some day that our minds cannot see the visions of God's truth nor dream the dreams of God's purpose which we would give the world to be able to realize, and all because we have let our minds dwell upon the unclean, and it is only the pure in heart who shall see God.

But if purity is a trust to keep, so is individuality.

> "To thine own self be true,
> And it must follow, as the night the day,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man."

The dramatist is speaking of conscience, but conscience is not the whole of personality. "Take heed to thyself and to the doctrine" (1 Tim. 4 : 16)—such was Paul's advice to the young teacher. Did he merely mean that Timothy was to keep himself pure and so to keep his teaching true? Is there not a deeper thought also to be read beneath the obvious, the thought that the young man must be true to his own individuality if he was to bear a living witness to God's truth? If you are to help other men to see things for themselves you must first have seen things with your own eyes. All that you have heard and read must be wrought into your own personality, not merely carried in your memory. It is a truism to say that no two men are absolutely alike; and yet we are always striving or consenting to be a reflection or a copy of some other man or a character struck off from some partisan type. Let us take an example from a not uncommon experience. A man goes up to the university with little more than the germs of ideas on the great questions of social or religious or political import. He may remain within the ranks of the school of thought

in which he found himself at home, or he may be attracted by some commanding or winning personality of an opposite type. In either case when the enthusiasm of friendship or party awakes within him, he is tempted, and mostly gives way to the temptation, to take over bodily the whole system of belief or practise which seems to be bound up with the ideal to which he has given his allegiance. There are, of course, men who have made this generous act of faith and never had cause to repent. Step by step the system has proved itself in experience, and the man has felt his own hold upon each part of the system grow surer and stronger. He has found it both honest and easy to conform to type, and no harm has been done to any element of his own personality. But for many men, perhaps for most men, any such adoption of a whole group of views and habits at the outset is a mortgaging of their intellectual future. They become anxiously afraid of any divergence on their part from the normal attitude of their associates; sooner or later one point or another arises on which they feel torn between loyalty and liberty; and not infrequently the result is either a weak inconsistency, a painful uncertainty, or a sacrifice of conscience, or an abandonment of the whole position which seemed to involve, along with some things that were dear, much that was unreal or impossible for them. We cannot insist too strongly that

each man's own individuality must be kept true to itself. He must be content perhaps for a long time to know roughly where he stands, to find a few main principles clear and strong at the outset, and to wait patiently till thought and experience clothe those principles with a garb that he can wear naturally and comfortably because it is his own. Such an attitude as this is, of course, open to misunderstanding and contempt. It seems so much more admirable to have a complete and consistent system of belief. It is painful to have to confess that you are still finding your way. But it is the safe and sure way that such a man is treading. Conviction is not a scheme, it is a growth. It may need a framework round which to grow, but it must be free to grow in and out of that frame.

I have dwelt upon this need of individuality because it seems to be so grave a need in our day. On every hand there are men without definite belief or deep conviction, and there is no greater hindrance in their way than the stereotyped reproduction of what passes for correct churchmanship or orthodox Christianity. If our faith is dear to us for our own sake and for our Master's sake, we shall welcome the thought that we may help others, as others before now have helped us, to see the beauty and feel the force of the truths of God. We must take care then of our own faith. We must let it grow simply and natu-

rally, as our own spiritual needs and our own observation lead us on, and bit after bit of the truth comes into sight and proves its power. Then our life will be all of a piece. We may say little or we may say much, but what we do say will speak with all the force of what we are. Our creed may not be so precise or so rounded as the creeds of men whom we admire and follow, but it will be our own. And when we face the giants of ignorance and evil and unbelief that lift their heads against God's holy name and the happiness of men, remember it was with his own sling and not with Saul's armor that David slew Goliath. "I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them."

Our nature is a trinity of powers, each of them to be given its rightful place, and each to be kept in its place. A man's whole nature is a trinity, body, soul and spirit. We must take care to maintain the balance of power. In a world where every one of those powers will have its work to do there is a nemesis which sooner or later waits upon neglect and upon excess. Yet our nature is not to be a mere balance of equal powers. It is a kingdom, and the spirit is its throne. Remember Plato's picture of the charioteer and his two steeds. Body and soul must own the spirit their master, and the spirit must hold its own. But there is another trinity of powers within the personality itself—will and thought and

feeling. Every man is a microcosm of humanity. There is in him something of the Roman, something of the Greek, and something of the Hebrew. Each of those figures of the old world stood for a great principle—the Roman for law and order, the Greek for language and philosophy, the Hebrew for righteousness and faith. As in the preparation of the world for the coming of the Son of God, so now in the history of His Church those three types are still at work. Discipline, doctrine, devotion—there we have three ideals which struggle for supremacy or strive to bear a predominant witness in the building up of the life of the Church. But they are all three natural and necessary parts of the life of the Church as a whole. So, too, they are all integral parts of our religious life as individuals, and what we have to do is to keep this threefold life as equal as we can in its growth. Each man, of course, has his characteristic note. Duty, knowledge, worship—each of us is stronger in one than in the other two. But we can and must deliberately foster these other sides of our religious life. We must for our own sakes. Defect often ends in disaster. The Pharisee stands for all time as a warning example of a one-sided religion. Many a man in our own day breaks down under life's manifold and searching tests at the point where his religious training was weakest. But we ought to be no less careful for the sake of the

Church. It is well that different ideals of Christian faith and practise should find distinct embodiment in the lives of individuals or in those societies within the Church which are a gain as well as a loss. But it is better far to see them blending in one and the same life, and to hear the dominant note of a strong character harmonizing with an unmistakable undertone of its seeming opposite. We are looking eagerly now for signs of unity in the religious world, nay, we are recognizing them more and more frequently. It may be that our day is the day of mutual acceptance of those parts of the truth that other men stand for. The time has come for each type to learn as it has taught. In that case it is a noble responsibility that rests upon the younger men who have come or are soon coming out into the world. But it is a grave responsibility. We must take care then of those aspects of religion that perhaps appeal least to us; our ruling passion, whether it be for discipline or orthodoxy or devotion, will take care of itself. We must guard the completeness of our spiritual life, lest neglect of any part of the unity of Christ's religion within us bring disaster upon the soul or loss to the Church and dishonor to the Master.

We must guard the purity of our own soul; maintain alike the individuality and the completeness of our own personality. It is a trust to be kept. But it is also a prize yet to be won.

"In your patience ye shall win your souls" (Luke 16 : 19, Ἐν τῇ ὑπομονῇ), not in passive waiting for God, but in active perseverance in the service of God. Yet there is no contradiction between waiting and working. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint" (Is. 40 : 31), three types of the Christian life, nay, three phases of every Christian life—the high ideal, the eager service, the steady plod, the last the hardest of them all. But what is it that we have in view through all these varying phases of life? Not merely the doing of God's work in the world, but the fulfilment of the destiny of our own being. To Paul salvation, even from sin, was a means to an end, and that end was the perfecting of the whole man. To realize the tremendous significance of this Christian ideal you have only to remember what Hinduism and Buddhism have to say of the goal of this life's effort. The Hindu believes himself to be part of the supreme Spirit, doomed to live in a world of illusion; and his one hope is to deserve at last to find again his unity with that Spirit and to lose this haunting delusion of personality. The Buddhist believes that life here is a burden of suffering, and that suffering is the penalty of desire, as desire is the penalty of conscious personality; and his one hope is that he may at last so con-

quer self that he may lose all sensation. His Nirvana is not indeed annihilation of being, but it is the destruction of all consciousness of being. Contrast with this dreary hope the promise of the Lord who claimed that He had come that we might have life and might have it more abundantly. Life for man means conscious personality. We believe that personality is neither a delusion nor a curse, but a fact and a blessing. It has responsibilities which are really ours; it has a destiny which is to be ours as the sequel to a life of growth and conflict. We believe that behind and within this complex nature of spirit, soul and body there is a living power that can use or misuse that threefold endowment, just as it can make or mar its outward environment of things and persons, and can in turn let itself be made or marred by that environment. We believe that this mysterious consciousness, of which body, soul and spirit are but the instruments, is as certainly distinct from the great consciousness of God as it is in its origin an outcome of God. We refuse to confound the Christian doctrine of immanence with the Hindu belief in identity. God is in us, and we are in God; but God is not the same thing as man, and never has been, and man is not the same thing as God, and never will be. We are made in His image, after His likeness. The old Alexandrian fathers loved to think of God's image as man's original endowment,

and the likeness of God as man's ultimate attainment, the crown of a life of obedience and devotion. It is just that likeness to God in character which is the true personality to be won. All things and persons that cross our path, all joys and sorrows that checker that path with sunshine and cloud, all lessons that wait to be read in the pages of experience, even the tale of sin and penitence, all the rich provision of grace and truth in the Church which God has made to be the home and school of the soul and its field of service, all these contribute to the making of the man, to the evolution of all that is latent in the personality which God created and which God has redeemed.

Some there are who for lack of patience lose their own souls. They cease to swim against the stream, and drift idly where it carries them. They lower the standard, and then slip further down themselves. They neither mount nor run nor walk, but saunter or loaf or wander aimlessly round, living spiritually and intellectually from hand to mouth:

> "Without one glance at the goal ahead,
> Without one grasp of the guiding thread,
> That links all life to its end."

But we must set ourselves to follow those who look ever upward and onward, one day thanking God and taking courage, another day, perhaps many days together sometimes, just holding patiently on their quest, but always

" pressing towards the mark for the prize " of their high calling; often faint, yet always pursuing.

Yet it might be an ideal far short of the Christian, if it were left stated thus. Aristotle can preach the gospel of an " end," which " is neither pleasure to self nor pleasure to others, but the perfect fulfilment of the activity of man." But for Paul, the Christian philosopher, the prize to be won is " the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus." It is paradox but also simple truth to say that the personality of a man finds itself only by losing itself in Christ, whose service is perfect freedom—*cui servire est regnare*—not the lower conception of freedom from restraint, but the higher freedom of self-control, which is the secret of power. This secret of power for present service is revealed to us " in Christ." So, too, the prize of our true destiny is " hid with Christ in God." John bears the same witness. When in his first epistle he turns to the thought of the destiny of the Christian, he tells us, " Now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." There is the prize of Christian personality to be won in Christ, and it leads us back to the thought of personality as a trust to be kept. " And he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is

pure." The same thought occurs again when the teacher of Ephesus becomes the seer of Patmos, and the ascended Lord gives him His message for the churches. So true is it that the Christian finds himself in Christ alone that it is hard to see here whether the new name promised as the reward of faithful perseverance is the revelation of the personality of the Lord or the recognition of a man's own true personality. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." There is the Christian reading the revelation of himself as he has become in the sight of God; but when the promise comes again, it is Christ's name that is written upon the Christian. "Him that overcometh I will make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God . . . and my new name." There is the Christian receiving the revelation of the Lord as He is in His glory. The vision that awaits the soul when it comes to receive the crown of life's growth and conflict is a twofold vision; it is the vision of its own true self in the light of the vision of its Lord. So it is even now, while the soul is yet winning its sustenance and its way. If you would keep yourself pure from sin, if you would realize

your own special gift for service, if you would train body, soul and spirit each to play its part in the perfecting of a true man, you must make it your daily endeavor to know Christ better and to love Him more. We are not merely the disciples of the greatest of all teachers, the followers of the highest example of a holy life, we are the members of the body of a Lord who is indeed our head, sympathizing with all that comes to us of joy or sorrow, of temptation or perplexity, and controlling our every thought and word and deed, a Lord who died to take away our sins and rose again to live in us that so we may live in Him.

RAUSCHENBUSCH

THE UNSPOKEN THOUGHTS OF JESUS

WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH

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THE UNSPOKEN THOUGHTS OF JESUS

PROF. WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH, D.D

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye can not bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth." —John 16 : 12-13.

WE all have our unspoken thoughts. Some are thoughts so envious, mean, or despairing that we are ashamed to utter them. Some are thoughts so righteous, brave, and far-reaching that we are afraid to express them for fear of social consequences. Jesus had no Bluebeard's chamber to lock up, nor was He afraid of the prophet's martyrdom. His silences, like His words, were prompted by love and pedagogic wisdom. "I have many things to say, but ye can not bear them now." His pupils were not yet out of fractions, and He was not going to burden them with quadratic equations. In regard to the truth, too, His yoke was easy and His burden light.

Some of His thoughts were so sad that they would have bruised His friends with grief. All great minds have a subsoil of profound melancholy. Jesus saw the cross from afar, gaunt and threatening, first as a possibility,

finally as a certainty, but it was a long time before He told His friends that His career was not to end in a triumphal march and royal enthronement, but in apparent failure and an outlaw's death. One of His most pathetic words, through which we catch a glimpse of His continued spiritual sufferings, is this: "When the Son of man comes, shall he find faith on earth?" But if He foresaw this, He did not tell His friends that after nineteen hundred years only a fraction of humanity would own Him king, and that only a fraction of that fraction would be serious about it.

There were other thoughts so radical and far-reaching that they would have unsettled the foundations of faith for His followers. He did not tell them that the Jewish nation would be superseded and the kingdom given to the Gentiles. He did not tell them outright that the temple and its worship and all the ceremonial ritual of their ancestral religion were to be laid away like the kindergarten material of childhood. There are plain indications that He knew and that His mind was working more and more consciously in that direction, but He did not force these ideas upon His followers.

But while Jesus had His silences, like every reserved mind and like every wise teacher, He looked forward to the time when the truths withheld would be revealed. "When the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into

all the truth." One of the finest facts about Judaism and about Christianity is that both are unfinished religions. The Old Testament does not claim that the revelation of God is completed; on the contrary, the air of expectancy is through it all: a new prophet like Moses, a greater king than David, a new covenant of the Spirit written in the hearts of men, a fuller outpouring of the Spirit, a perfect reign of God were to come. In the same way in the New Testament every face is turned to the better future. Christianity at the outset was quite as much a religion of hope as a religion of love. But if you consider how prone the great leaders, and especially the great system-makers, are to think they know it all, the more does this spiritual modesty, this unquenchable hopefulness, this sense of the inexhaustible resources of God, seem proof that the Christian religion really was illuminated by the light of God.

We know that the expectation of Jesus came to pass. Nothing is more remarkable about the beginnings of the Church than the capacity for growth inherent in its leaders. This crude human material from Galilee was transformed by an inward power that lifted them beyond themselves and turned fishermen into apostles and initiators of a new spiritual era. They had three propulsive forces upon them: a great aim, a real human brotherhood, and the mysterious Spirit of God within. I be-

lieve in the Spirit of God. When He brooded over the waters, He turned chaos into form and beauty, and when He broods over a human soul, the creative force is present which works miracles on human nature. Other men merely rearrange what is already present in human life. The rare men who listen to the inner voice, whose vision is clarified by conscious contact with God, and whose will is hardened to the steel-edge by leaning back on the Eternal—they introduce new forces into the stale world. The individuals and the religious bodies who have trusted to the mystic enlightenment have usually been distrusted and derided by their contemporaries, but somehow the subsequent progress of religion and of morality swings over into the track marked out by these pioneers who followed God and not tradition. They have often anticipated the social evolution of mankind by centuries. There is no teacher like the Spirit.

Jesus said the Spirit "shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you." Truths which Jesus had foreshadowed, suggestions which He had thrown out, corollaries which He had left unformulated, would stand out and loom up as great compelling truths. The spring only quickens the seeds dropped by autumn. The Spirit came like a shower of rain on the seeds that lay dormant in the tropical dust and they woke to life. Every truth contains new

truth for a mind stimulated by outward occasion and inward impulse, just as every leaf of the calla lily is a sheath from which the next leaf grows. Our new psychology has shown that the human memory is a vast storehouse of unassimilated information and impressions. The observations made in our childhood, the chance utterances made by our teachers, which seemed so irrelevant or even foolish when we heard them—there they lie. By and by comes some great change in our life, some great impulse of human love or divine aspiration, and the sleeping seeds of truth awaken and take root. Great masses of truth in the New Testament were practically useless to the Church for centuries, and then the Spirit and the occasion met, and they sprang to life. Paul's thought about the uselessness of the law and the power of faith to justify was unintelligible for the Middle Ages, but it became vivid and vital when the aroused Church of the Reformation was stripping off the inherited legalism of medieval religion. The social contents of the Bible have been lying unrecognized and the social purpose of Jesus was slighted or denied, till the modern world began to agonize over the social problems and the Spirit summoned our generation imperiously to carry into effect the holy will of Christ. Thus the Spirit unfolds and quickens the historical heritage left by Christ in the individual, in the Church, and in humanity,

and the unbearable truths become bearable and dear.

Would it be possible to divine what the unspoken thoughts of Jesus were? Could we work back now into the inner recesses of His mind? If the subsequent teachings of the Spirit have really thus unfolded the germinal truths that lay locked in His mind, it might be possible to trace them back to Him; especially if some passing utterance of His showed that He harbored the thought. The undertaking is venturesome, but even if our exploration ends in "Perhaps," it will carry some reward.

Almost the first great advance step which the Church took, was the recognition of the universal mission of Christianity. The Jewish disciples set out by assuming as a matter of course that salvation was for the Jews, and that heathen could share in it only by becoming Jews. The book of Acts is a bright account of the triumphal transition from Jerusalem to Rome. But from the letters of Paul we learn the dark background of obstinate orthodoxy and pious intrigue which resisted this process at every step. It took the best fighting strength of one of the world's great fighters to beat down the national barriers and let Christianity out on its world-wide career. Now, I take it that this was one of the truths germinating in the mind of Jesus and unfolded by the Spirit. So far as I remember He nowhere expressly announced it except in

one saying ascribed to the time after His resurrection. But His mind was working in that direction. When He met the Roman centurion and saw his spiritual susceptibility, He at once had a vision of heathen coming from East and West to share in the Messianic table round. He emphasized the fact that the one leper who had moral refinement enough to come back and thank Him was a Samaritan, and when He wanted to hold up a model of brotherly kindness, He picked out an heretical alien and set him in lurid contrast to the religious pillars of His own nation. With a mind so little bound by national prejudices and so swift to recognize human worth in outsiders, there were surely daring and hopeful glances across the wall of partition into the vast fields of humanity outside of His nation.

A second truth into which the Spirit had to lead the Church was the great law of development. The common Jewish expectation was that the kingdom of the Messiah would come in suddenly. It was all fixed up and ready in heaven, and some day they would open their eyes and say: "Lo, there it is." The early Christians shared this catastrophic hope and all their doctrinal thought, their preaching, their moral endeavor and church discipline centered about the great consummation when the Lord should return. It would have shattered their faith if they had known that nineteen centuries would run on without a

break. Jesus on the other hand had comprehended the law of spiritual evolution. His parables discouraged the theory of catastrophe and insisted that growth takes time and will not be hurried. But He had to wrap that disappointing truth into parabolic form or they would have resented and repudiated it. The Spirit has had to lead the Church into this truth, and it has not yet comprehended it fully. In its conception of conversion for the individual, and in its outlook for social regeneration the rank and file of the Church have not yet outgrown the youthful hopes of brilliant suddenness.

A third truth which was familiar to Jesus and veiled to His disciples was the pure spirituality of the new religion. All primitive religions were so embedded in traditional forms that form and essence were indistinguishable for most of the worshipers. To the rabbis and Pharisees Jesus seemed to be undermining religion itself when He neglected the ritual fastings and washings. Jesus nowhere called His disciples out of Judaism. He did not tell them to cease the observance of the old rites. Yet He was emancipated from the old forms Himself. He scarcely mentions the temple, the center of religion. He foretold the time when all questions of holy places would be antiquated. He treated the Sabbath from a totally new point of view. The whole business of clean and unclean food He regarded as

irrelevant and without religious basis. Forms of prayer were of great moment to His countrymen; Jesus taught only one prayer and the distinguishing characteristic of that is its utter simplicity and directness. To strip religion of all forms and make it purely a matter of love to God and man was so immense an innovation that we have hardly come in sight of it yet. But wherever the tuition of the Spirit can be discerned in the past, we see humanity veering in that direction so far as the professional exponents of religion will permit, and to those who are following the leading of the Spirit, it is indisputably clear that Jesus is with them in it.

Thus we have tried in three instances to divine the unspoken thoughts of Jesus by working back from the later development of the Church to the inner mind of Jesus. Whether we have been successful or not, it is impossible to escape a sense of the affectionate patience of Jesus in giving them only what they could bear. He was a superb teacher, because He loved superbly. Nor can we escape a feeling of our own dulness and slowness. Singly and collectively we have bickered about trivialities and heroically resisted everything that might by chance make Christians of us. We have all been guilty of keeping back the progress of truth. The progress has been so slow that it takes only a fit of melancholy to make a man doubt if there has been any real prog-

ress at all. But against our moral stupidity Christ sets his unwavering determination to have us learn. If not to-day, then to-morrow. Without haste and without rest the great Teacher is urging us on. Learn we must, for some day we are to see God. But for anyone to whom spiritual education is no longer the unwilling task of a slave, but to whom truth is the glad sunlight of the soul, this saying of Jesus opens an endless vista of truth, an ever-expanding horizon, mystery after mystery coming out of the grayness of the dawn and breaking into glory.

RAYMOND

THE SUPREME INTERROGATION

ANDREW VAN VRANKIN RAYMOND

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THE SUPREME INTERROGATION

ANDREW V. V. RAYMOND, D.D.

"What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ?"—Matt. 27 : 22.

A PERSISTENT question—as pertinent to-day as when Pilate asked it—and as fateful: the one question, in fact, which more than any other has made history and is making history.

Now, as at first, its importance is not clearly seen. Pilate certainly would not have compared it with the great questions they were asking at Rome and Corinth and Athens and Ephesus. Wherever the currents of life converged, some supreme interest provoked discussion and brought crowds upon the street. Among the capitals Jerusalem was accounted small and its interests local. What if the people were excited? The question at issue was apparently trifling—nothing more than the disposition to be made of a Teacher whose words had given offense—a Teacher, a traveling rabbi, who had aroused a certain enthusiasm in one of the provinces, Galilee, but had no important following in Jerusalem itself. Had He been a political organizer or a military leader, it would have been different. Even to-day the teacher is of little account in

the eyes of constituted authority. So slow is the world in learning the real source of power! To Pilate it must have seemed that whatever was done to this Teacher would be of little moment, save to a few inconspicuous and uninfluential men who had followed Him from place to place and become imbued with His ideas. There was little in the circumstances to indicate that the question, "What shall I do with Jesus, which is called Christ?" was the determining question of the age to which Pilate belonged, for when Jesus was crucified with Pilate's consent, if not at his command, a force was introduced into the thought and life of the world which has overturned governments and remolded society. Under the symbol of the cross have been won the successive victories of civilization. To question this is to challenge the history of the Western world at every stage. To accept it, however, is not to account for it nor to justify all the inferences which men have drawn from it. It is enough to recognize that the question which seemed to be unimportant, has proved to be the great question of all time, for the Jesus who was crucified was not destroyed. What was done to Him was not done with Him. Whatever the mystery of it, He has been the most real person on earth ever since; so that the question has never ceased, "What shall we do with Jesus, which is called Christ?" The story of His resurrection has been established,

in the spirit at least, by the persistent influence of His personality, the consciousness of His presence, which has made Pilate's question the one question which no generation could escape. We are asking it to-day more seriously perhaps than it has ever before been asked—certainly with a clearer understanding of all that it involves. In spite of our materialism, if not indeed because of it, the truth which Jesus Christ incarnates arrests thought. Our greater intelligence has not freed us from the challenge of His wisdom or the inherent authority of His character. We meet Him upon our streets, in our temples, at our feasts, among our law-makers, before our governors, over against our treasuries, in the presence of our children, in the burial places of our dead. He does not strive nor cry. He represents neither the violence nor the compulsion of force. He makes no appeal to our fears. He seeks no favor. His presence is as silent as it is invisible. Yet we cannot escape from it though we may try to ignore it. Whether one will or no, in all our activities, in all our relationships, in all our purposes, in all our philosophies of life, we must ask, "What shall we do with Jesus, which is called Christ?" For the presence which we cannot banish is that of the truth for which Christ stands, the truth which in His words has gone into all the world, the truth which in His character has become the standard of human judgment, the

spirit of truth which lived in His body till that body perished, and then lived on, stamped forever with His personality, bearing witness of Him, bringing Him to remembrance everywhere and always. This is the reality of Christianity. There is never a place, never an occasion from which the spirit of truth can be banished, and wherever that spirit is, there is Jesus, which is called Christ, His teaching, His character, His life, silently protesting or encouraging.

It is all very real, this persistent influence of the life that seemed to end on Calvary. It was real, when after His death His disciples were gathered in an upper room and the door being shut, Jesus stood in the midst of them. It was real when Saul who had hated Him fell to the earth, crying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" It was real when men were ready to die rather than deny it. It was real when it modified the laws of the Roman Empire. It was real when the Crusades were organized and the ideals of chivalry created. It was real when Europe was shaken by the Reformation. It was real when the American Republic was founded upon the principles of equal rights and even-handed justice. It was real when slavery was abolished and Cuba freed. It is real to-day when all over our land men are asking what is right and are seeking to make the right effective. Our ideas of right, our ideals of character, our convic-

tions of duty, are drawn from the life and teachings of Jesus which is called Christ. Consciously or unconsciously we are under the influence of His personality, and it but makes that influence the more direct and practical that the increase of intelligence has banished the superstitions that long touched the person of Christ with unreality. It is written that when He left His disciples, a cloud received Him out of their sight, but according to His promise He has come again out of the cloud and is once more a Man among men. The Christ whose presence we cannot escape is the Christ who stood face to face with Pilate, who walked and talked and ate and slept and loved and suffered as a man. It is with this Christ that we have to do. And now, as nineteen hundred years ago, what is to be done with Him is the question of supreme moment, both for the individual and the State.

The Christ with whom we have to do is, then, the Christ who puts humanity first—human interests above all other considerations. This is the meaning of His life. He went among the people who needed help and gave them the help they needed. He could not see a heartache without trying to relieve it. A hungry multitude must eat and be filled before He would let them go to their homes. The sightless must see, the crippled walk, the sick be made strong, or His day's work was not done. The outcasts must know

that they have a friend, the sinful must know the joy of forgiveness, the anxious must find their burden shared, the despondent must gain new hope and courage. To this work He gave Himself, all that He was, all that He had. Nothing else appealed to Him as worthy. Nothing beside that He saw on earth had the value of a human life. This is the Christ whose presence we cannot escape. He stands by the side of the man whose day's work, whose life work, is to buy and sell and get gain, and at every pause in the trafficking, or whenever an opportunity offers for the introduction of another thought, that silent presence suggests, "to what end is it all? Take heed and beware of covetousness for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." At some time in his life, if not each day of his life, every fortune builder whose only thought is his fortune, has to do with Jesus Christ, who tells him that he is missing his opportunity, that his real wealth is in the lives about him, that there is no such return of satisfaction, no such joy of living, no such conscious dignity, no such essential greatness, as that which comes with living in others' lives, putting a shoulder under others' burdens, relieving some of the troubles, allaying some of the sorrows, saving from some of the sin and wretchedness of earth. There is no escape from this teaching and influence of Jesus which is

called Christ. He is present to-day in every city and village and farmhouse of our land where the spirit of service is protesting against the folly of thinking that money is the measure of a man, or that the satisfaction of saying, "Soul, thou hast many goods laid up for many years, take thine ease," is the best that life can give. He is present to-day in every political gathering, in every legislative assembly, in every executive chamber, wherever the rights of the people claim recognition in the face of the privileges of the few. He is present in every association and conference, in every tribunal and court where the good of offenders pleads against the arbitrary penalties of impersonal law. The question of the age making current history in all popular agitations, in all the unrest of society, in all the strivings of unsatisfied humanity, is "What shall we do with Jesus, which is called Christ?" What answer shall we make to the appeal of the truth which He holds before us: that humanity comes first in all right thinking and true living, that greater than all other claims are those of human brotherhood?

But the Christ with whom we have to do, from whose presence we can not escape, is the Christ of spiritual beliefs and spiritual power, calling Himself the Son of God, as well as the Son of man. This is the most evident fact in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. He believed in a spiritual world, spiritual forces, spiritual

treasures, spiritual fellowship. To Him God was a Father; His wisdom and love the great realities of the universe. As the Son of God He drew strength from above. His work was not His own but the Father's who sent Him. His words were not His own but the Father's who dwelt in Him. He had no power but that which was given Him of His Father. He and His Father were one. This earth was a part of His Father's house. Flowers and birds were His Father's care. The suffering of the cross was His Father's will. In every conceivable way did His life express the power of faith in an unseen world, faith in unseen forces, faith in infinite love. The power of that faith appeared in the purity of His thought, the quiet dignity of His manner, the assurance and authority of His words, the greatness of His deeds, the clearness of His moral vision, the calm of His spirit, the sublimity of His dying prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He met men trained in every school of thought, and by the power of His faith in unseen realities confounded their wisdom. He met men subject to fear, anxiety, disease, and by the power of His faith made them free. Wherever He went virtue went out of Him. "In him was life and the life was the light of men." That life was the energy of a soul quickened by assurance of the invisible and the infinite, nourished by constant communion with the

Father of spirits, the creative Spirit, source of all wisdom and power. As no one beside in the world's history, He yielded himself to the influences of unseen realities, believed in God, obeyed God, rested in God, loved God, and behold what followed: the profoundest wisdom, the most exalted character, the most beneficent life the world has known.

This is the Christ with whom we have to do—not the Christ of art or theology, but the Man who lived day by day as the Son of God, walking in a light above the brightness of the sun, a light above that of the natural world, seeing that which nature does not disclose, believing that which nature does not verify. This is the Christ with whom we have to do. Materialistic thought, scientific discoveries have not banished Him and cannot banish Him. Opposed to every claim that nature is the beginning and the end, that nothing beyond matter is known or knowable, is the witness of His life. With clear gaze He looks into the eyes of the man who says, "This earth is all; man is its creature and returns to its bosom," and replies, "God is all in all. Man is His child. Dust returns to dust, but the spirit to God who gave it." Over against every theory of life that excludes spiritual energy, spiritual ministry, we place the testimony of His faith, with its power to enrich and ennoble and glorify human existence. To the man who says God is a name, He answers,

"God is a Father." To the man who says God is law, He says, "God is love." To the man who in his discouragement says, "All things are against me," He replies, "All things work together for good to them that love God." To the man who sits in loneliness of spirit, sorrowing without hope for the lost, He says, "Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions."

But what does all this mean? Is it not simply multiplying words? What evidence does it offer that can weigh for a moment against the evidence borne by the microscope and crucible? What does it mean? It means the evidence of a life. Has that no weight in determining truth? Is there nothing real, nothing convincing in experience? Has the spirit of man no voice for man? Is there no appeal of life that one may hear without intellectual reproach and shame? Is only that true which the eyes can see and the hands can handle? Is there nothing that physical tests do not reveal? Is there anything more real than virtue and courage and hope and love? Without them what is life worth? What, then, shall we say of the power that quickens them? By the testimony of life itself it is more real than the solid earth beneath our feet. The tests of science may banish God and make a mockery of prayer, but the prayer that brings peace to a troubled heart and

strength to a weakened will, that gives purpose and courage, purifying thought and kindling love, brings God back, and the witness of that soul-experience outweighs all the protests of reason, the theories and deductions of the human mind. The prayer tests sometimes proposed by science are a confession of the utter inability of science to appreciate the laws and life of the spiritual world.

The witness of the life of Jesus, which is called Christ, is that with which we have to do. The fulness of life that came with His conscious sonship to God is an increasing call to the spirit of man, affirming the reality of the spiritual world, inviting to the peace and power of spiritual experiences.

"What shall we do with Jesus, which is called Christ?" What have men done with Him? What did they do at the beginning? They cried, "Away with him, crucify him. Crucify him! Not this man, but Barabbas." Now Barabbas was a robber. Do we realize the significance of that choice? The man who took from men preferred above the Man who gave to men. It seems incredible, yet there is the fact of history, and a continuous fact. The choice of the ages is between Barabbas and Christ, the robber and the benefactor—the man, the influence, the philosophy that depletes life, and that which fills it full. Who is Barabbas—what is Barabbas, but the incarnation of the power that takes from man what

belongs to man, and what robbery compares with that which takes from man his soul, his aspirations and inspirations, his conscious fellowship with infinite purity and love, his treasures of faith and hope? What eternal significance is there in the very character of the man who was preferred to Christ, Barabbas a robber!

How that scene in Jerusalem concentrates the meaning of all the history of thought, all the story of human life! Every generation has asked, "What shall we do with Jesus, which is called Christ?" What shall we do with the truth of human brotherhood held before us by the Son of man, who came not to be ministered unto but to minister, who gave the first place in His thought and life to the rights and needs of humanity? What answer have the generations given? Slowly but surely the cry has diminished in volume and intensity. "Away with him, crucify him. Crucify him! Not this man, but Barabbas." Slowly but surely the power of selfishness has decreased and the interests of humanity grown upon the thought and life of the world. Ever larger has become the number of followers of the Son of man, and this generation, as no other, is choosing Jesus, which is called the Christ. We see that choice in the legislation that increasingly protects the weak and helpless from the robbery of the strong, the laws against child labor and all the inhuman

conditions of the life of the toilers. We see it in the demands for sanitation in our cities, for cleanliness and light and air in our tenements and factories, for protective devices and preventive measures. We see it in the growing sense of obligation on the part of those who have, toward those who have not, which multiplies our humanitarian agencies and institutions of every kind. Not yet is the choice of the Son of man absolute and complete. Still, as of old, traditional ideas, inherited privileges, inspire the cry, "Away with him." Still, as of old, selfish interests seek to perpetuate vested rights and class distinctions at the expense of the people, but the day of Barabbas is dying and the day of the Son of man dawning. The blind selfishness which robs life of the satisfaction and joy of service, is yielding to the spirit of love that enriches and ennobles life. Jesus, which is called the Christ, did not live in vain, is not living in vain. "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied."

And what shall we do with the truth of the spiritual world held before us by the Son of God who brings life and immortality to light? What answer have the generations given? Can we say as we do of the Son of man, that slowly and surely the cry has grown feebler, "Away with him, crucify him. Not this man, but Barabbas." Have the centuries shown no progress in spiritual experiences?

Has there been no increasing belief in the Fatherhood of God, the reality of spiritual forces, the blessedness of spiritual ministries? Is not this the fact, that now, as never before, men are choosing the truth that gives life its largest meaning, that they refuse to be robbed of the comfort of hope and the inspiration of faith, that they hear and heed the voice calling from the unseen world. The spirit of man has not lost its longing, its thirst for spiritual good, as the intelligence of man has increased. The appeal of spiritual realities is to the spirit, not the intellect, to the essential man that suffers and sorrows. As life enlarges, the spirit means more than the flesh, and the appeal to the spirit comes with increasing authority. This does not mean that superstitious ideas may not have been lost, that many religious forms may not have been abandoned, that many objects of prayer may not have been discarded. All these results may have followed, have indeed followed the growth of knowledge, but the great spiritual verities have not been yielded.

We cannot say, however, that the choice of the Son of God is yet absolute and complete. Now, as of old, Barabbas has his friends. Ideas and theories that rob man of his soul, and leave him like a beast to perish, are chosen by many, instead of the truth as it is in Jesus, which is called Christ; but the time will surely come when the spirit will be mightier

than the flesh and the time will come when spiritual truth will be supreme, and every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God, the Father.

REED

AN INTERVIEW WITH PAUL

GEORGE EDWARD REED

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AN INTERVIEW WITH PAUL

PRES. GEORGE EDWARD REED, D.D., LL.D.

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God."—Rom. 1 : 1.

THE city is Rome; the date, the year 64 of the Christian era. In the streets of the great metropolis are the usual hurrying throngs, crowds of men and women gathered from every portion of the vast Roman world. Here, soldiers fresh from the overthrow and pillage of distant provinces; there, a victorious general, followed by troops of captives led along in the train of his triumph; yonder, cohorts marching out from the golden milestone in the forum, the busy center of the political, military and social life of the imperial city.

About you, merchants of Africa, of Spain, of distant Asia; quick-witted Greeks from Athens, Corinth, Antioch, and Ephesus; near by, fierce barbarians from Gaul, Britain, the forests of Germany, and the lowlands of Holland; swarthy-skinned natives from Egypt and northern Africa; bearded Goths from the shores of the Danube—Jew and Gentile, Roman and barbarian, bond and free—a confused inextricable mass, filling the city streets

with a jargon of voices the like of which may be heard in no other city of the world.

If architecture interests you, yonder are the vast and splendid baths—stately structures of marble, glowing in the soft warm sunlight—buildings upon which have been lavished the wealth of kingdoms, filled and thronged the day long with idle thousands, amid the play of fountains, the murmuring of falling waters, and the strains of aeolian music, lounging away the long bright hours of the sunny Italian day.

Yonder, towering above the acres of filthy, low-roofed, dismal dens in which are housed the vast proletariat hordes with which the city is afflicted, hordes ever ripe for rebellion under the lead of any Catiline inveighing against the safeguards of law and order, rise the stately residences of the rich and noble, crowned here and there by the sumptuous splendors of the palaces of the Cæsars.

Yonder, the miserable Ghetto, the residence of the proscribed and hated Jew. Out there, stretching everywhere about the bases of the hills, the enormous slave population of the city, a population ever increasing as ever extend the conquests of the Roman arms.

If sports demand your attention, there are the vast amphitheaters, the centers of the city's amusements, enormous structures, the circling tiers of which are ever crowded by throngs of men and women, inured to scenes of

cruelty, maddened with passion, thirsting ever for blood, shouting ever, "Kill! kill!" for every poor wretch who, gashed and bleeding, sinks beneath the blows of stronger or more savage foes; arenas destined ere long to drink the blood of thousands of men, women and children, whose only crime shall be refusal to renounce a religious faith dearer than life itself, esteeming the reproach of Christ an honor greater than an emperor's smile, ever mindful of the recompense of reward, the crown of life awaiting all who love His appearing.

These are scenes worthy our study did time permit, and were our purpose but the gratification of curiosity. Our business, however, is not with the squalor or the splendor, the glory or the shame of the great city lying there on hills immortal in song and story.

Rather is it with yonder low, dismal structure, two-thirds under ground, known far and wide as the Mamertine prison—a name as familiar perhaps in the ears of a Roman as is that of "The Tombs" to the people of New York; a prison more terrible even than was the Bastile, the fall of which was celebrated with such demoniac joy in the dark days of that awful upheaval of human passion, that volcano of human wickedness known as the French Revolution; a prison over whose portal the inscription placed by Dante on the gateway of the infernal world, "All hope

abandon ye who enter here " would not be inappropriate.

Here let us enter, making inquiry for a certain noted prisoner, Paul by name, reputed to be the founder of a certain new religion, the tenets of which he for years has been inculcating, and which in Rome under his powerful preaching has attained not only a foothold, but a success which seemed to threaten the ancient faiths of the people; a religion which, cherished at first chiefly by tradesmen, artizans, soldiers, the outcast population of the city, has eventually so extended its influence, even in Rome, that, as rumor has it, it has invaded the precincts of the imperial household itself, while from the forum, soldiers and sailors have carried it to the ends of the earth. Now, however, his course is run. He has been condemned to die; indeed he has but a few hours to live, for on this day his head is to roll upon the dust of the floor.

Directly we are in his presence. There he sits, chained to the death-watch who keeps guard by his side; an old man, bent with years, face sickly with prison pallor, for he has been for months where scarce a ray of light has entered his prison cell. His head is bent upon his breast as if engaged in deepest thought. As we gaze, his gaunt, emaciated figure trembles as with strong emotion; his lips move; he is on his knees as if in earnest prayer to some object invisible to mortal eyes.

The prayer is not for himself, but for others, for those whom he is to leave, for the children whom God has given as the seals of his ministry. Listen! you may hear his very words:

'For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.'

The prayer ended, the suppliant rises, noting now, for the first time, that he is no longer alone. "To whom, I ask, am I indebted for the honor of this visit? and for what purpose are ye come? Speak, for time hastens, and the time of my departure is at hand."

"We are, good sir, from a distant land, visitors for the time, in the imperial city. While here we have heard much of a certain new religion, the founder of which, as rumor has it, was a Jew of Galilee, crucified by the Romans, at the instigation of his own countrymen, some thirty years ago, but who was after-

ward reported to have risen from his grave, and, having been seen of many for forty days, finally, as if not subject to nature's laws, ascended bodily into the heavens, disappearing from all human view, a cloud receiving him out of sight—not, however, until two men in white apparel—celestial visitants—had appeared, declaring: ' This same Jesus which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven '—which explanation, we understand, his followers have never abandoned, looking still for what they call ' the glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming to judge the quick and the dead.'

" Of this new religion, thou art, of all men, the acknowledged expounder. Wherever we have mentioned the matter, wherever we have asked for fuller knowledge of the new ideas, men have given us thy name. Lately, we heard of thy whereabouts; that thou wert in the Mamertine prison, a prisoner condemned to death, altho for what cause thou art to die, neither we, nor others, have the slightest knowledge. Therefore are we come that from thy own lips, if so it shall please thee, we may hear more perfectly both of thyself and of the faith for which thou dost so earnestly contend. Will it please thee then to speak? "

" With all my heart. To me the theme is all absorbing. For forty years I have been preaching it—the story of Jesus and the res-

urrection; happy if anywhere I could win even one to a faith dearer to me than life itself, and for the furtherance of which I have given the energies of my life. But where shall I begin?"

"Tell us, sir, first of all, something of the story of thy early years, before that thou didst become a Christian, that the better we may understand the change that later came in the fortunes of thy life; for once, we understand, thou wast an opponent of the doctrines thou now dost teach, persecuting even unto death those that called themselves followers of the great Nazarene."

"That then will I do. Hear ye the story. To begin with I am, as ye know, a Jew, 'born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city.' By birth a Jew, 'of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews,' I am, nevertheless, a citizen of Rome, inheriting the privilege from my father, a freeman of the Roman empire; otherwise I should not have been brought to stand before Cæsar, but must have been tried by mine own countrymen, in Jerusalem, in which city no man is better known than Paul the apostle.

"Upon my life in Tarsus, however, I need not dwell. Suffice it to say that there as boy and man for twenty years and more, 'after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.' Proud of my race, zealous of all its

traditions, observant of all the requirements of our religion, and looking with contempt upon all who were alien to the commonwealth of Israel.

" My school life ended, I went at length to Jerusalem, the great center of the religious and educational life of our people, intent upon preparing myself more perfectly for my chosen work as a teacher of the law. Arriving, I entered the school of the renowned Gamaliel, the wisest and best of the teachers of his day, whose memory I have ever revered. Pursuing there the routine of my student life, suddenly there came to the city tidings that soon set the city in a ferment—tidings of the appearance in the midst of the wilderness of Judea, by the banks of the Jordan of a weird and wonderful man, a man who in spirit and life seemed a man of another age, a prophet like unto Elijah of old. Clothed in skins, feeding upon locusts and wild honey, suddenly he came forth crying with startling emphasis, ' Repent ye! Repent ye! Repent ye! '

" ' For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. . . . Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.'

" Publicans came to be baptized, saying:

'Master, what shall we do?' And he said unto them:

'Exact no more than that which is appointed you. Soldiers came, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them; Do violence to no one, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages. Pharisees came and Sadducees—the religious classes of our people. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand; and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.'

"Curiosity rose: excitement deepened; everywhere was expectation; all men mused in their hearts of John, whether, indeed, he were the Christ, or not—the long-expected Messiah of our race. But John answered, saying unto them all:

'I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the lachet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his

hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. Repent! Repent! Repent! '

" One day as he was baptizing by the fords of the Jordan, there came to him a young man, Jesus by name, from Nazareth, an obscure village of Galilee, requesting baptism at his hand.

' But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. And lo a voice from heaven, saying, " This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." . . . The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God. . . . He must increase, but I must decrease.'

" Soon after, he died—beheaded in the dun-

geons of Machærus into which he had been cast for daring to denounce the wickedness of the reigning king.

"Hardly had the excitement attendant upon John's appearance subsided when again the city was thrown into excitement by the rumors of the words and deeds of another remarkable character—a Jesus of Nazareth—the very same, indeed, whose appearance had so agitated John, and of whom he had said, 'He is the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.' Month after month the rumors grew apace, and again men wondered, saying: 'Who was he?'

"Finally the answer came: 'I that speak to thee am he,—the Messiah—the Son of the living God!'

"By and by He came to Jerusalem. There He was studied by our rabbis, questioned, watched—'Who is He?'—'An impostor,' said our rabbis, our doctors. 'As such He must be put out of the way.' Three years after His meeting with John He was slain. Well do I remember the time. It was the great week of the Passover; the city was full, and thousands witnessed His death. All thought that we had heard the last of Jesus of Nazareth; and indeed, such was my own thought.

"Three days after, however, came the startling report that He who was dead had risen; had been seen of Mary; then by many. The

rabbis denied it. ' The apostles have stolen His body,' they said. Nothing, however, seemed to check the growing belief that the report was true. Men affirmed that they had seen Him, talked with Him. For myself I did not believe it. I joined with those who were determined to exterminate the whole poisonous brood. Then the persecution broke out, a persecution in which I myself was the leader, sacking the homes of the Christians, burning, slaughtering.

" One day in the council stood a man, Stephen by name, ' who, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost ' was said to have done wonderful miracles in the name of Jesus. Arrested on the charge of blasphemy, he had been brought for trial.

" I heard his memorable defense, his face the while shining as the face of an angel. ' Behold,' he cried, ' I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.' Then we rushed upon him, hurrying him out of the city, stoning him as we ran. Suddenly as I stood by watching as the stones crashed in upon him, I saw him fall, crying and saying with a loud voice, ' Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,' and when he had said this he fell asleep, his face shining even in death as I had seen it in the council.

" To me that death was a revelation. Could it be true that the Jesus whom we had slain was indeed the Son of God? It could not be;

yet Stephen's dying prayer was ever ringing in my ears. It made me frantic, driving me to still more desperate measures. In Jerusalem the work was finished, the disciples killed or driven away. I determined to follow them, for

'I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagog; and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities. Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, At midday, . . . I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee: delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon . . . I was not disobedient

unto the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple and went about to kill me. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.' ''

"Truly, sir, a most wonderful story, full we suspect of privations and sufferings."

"Yea, verily, they would fill a volume:

'In labors abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.'

"What end, good sir, were all these sufferings to subserve; what the object of them all?

"'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings,

being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as tho I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Jesus Christ. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus! ' ''

" Truly a noble purpose, and pursued with wonderful energy and perseverance. You speak, however, much of the resurrection of the dead; pray, tell us more upon this point, for upon it, if your reasoning be correct, depends largely the whole fabric of the Christian faith. May it please you to give us your doctrine upon this matter? "

" Most willingly, sir, and in doing so I can not perhaps do better than to quote again in your hearing what years ago I wrote to certain of my converts upon this vital and important matter. Let me give it to you even as then I wrote it:

" ' Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of about

five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that I am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed. Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith, All things are put under

him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all. Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die. Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God; I speak this to your shame.' "

" Many thanks, good sir, for your exposition of the great doctrine upon which your whole faith seems to be built—the rising of the dead. But the mystery still remains. How is it that the dead are raised up, and with what body do they come? Explain, if possible, for this whole doctrine of the resurrection is full of mystery."

" With pleasure will I answer. Take examples from the natural world. Go into the fields. Take the seed that is sown of the husbandmen, and remember that that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.

" 'And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance to be wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.' Again;—' All flesh is not the

same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are all celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.' "

" But, good sir, according to your doctrine some will be living when the end of things shall come and shall not taste of death. Shall flesh and blood enter into the kingdom of God? "

" No; flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

" ' Behold I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet

shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruption shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.' "

" Thanks again, for your exposition. One question more:

" Have you ever regretted your change of views? "

" No; to live is Christ; to die, gain. The things which were gain to me I have counted loss.

" 'Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.' "

" How has your message been received? "

" Variously; to the Jews this doctrine of Jesus has been a stumbling block; to the Greeks foolishness, but to us who believe the power of God, and the wisdom of God."

" Did you not fear to preach it in Rome? "

"No, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.'"

"But, sir, have you in this religious faith, found peace with God, the peace for which in early years you were seeking?"

"Yea, verily, 'being justified by faith I have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.'"

"But, now, what of the end? You are about to die. What does your faith in the risen Christ do for you now?"

"'Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.'

"'Who,' indeed, 'shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'"

"But, hark! What sound is that? It is the tread of armed men. Paul, thine hour has come. How now dost thou feel?"

"'I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.'"

A moment, and the soldiers enter. A rough command; a sad procession; a kneeling figure; a swift flash of steel; a head falling in the dust—and that is all. The soul of the hero is in the "undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveler returns."

So much for the life and experience of Paul. Ponder well the story! Behold in it indisputable argument for the Christian faith—the argument which of all others brought Lord Lyndhurst to his knees; which has never been refuted; which to-day abides in strength impregnable, the convincing demonstration of the essential facts and the abiding potency of the Christian faith.

Take it to heart. Exalt the Christ to him so wonderfully revealed, so loyally served. Bow down before Him. Believe upon His name—the only name "under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Follow, serve, proclaim him.

"Happy if with thy latest breath
Thou mayst but gasp His name;
Preach Him to all, and cry in death,
Behold, behold the Lamb."

Standing, after the lapse of the centuries, in the shadow of the rugged cross on which the Son of God expiated the sins of the world, shall we not cry with the heroic soul of whom we have been speaking: "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Jesus Christ by which I am crucified unto the world, and the world crucified unto me."

RICE

THE ONE SAVING NAME

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THE ONE SAVING NAME

THE REV. PROF. WILLIAM NORTH RICE, PH.D., L.L.D.

"There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—Acts 4 : 12.

PETER and John had healed in the name of Jesus the impotent man who sat begging for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, and Peter had improved the occasion to preach salvation through the name of Jesus with such effect that multitudes were added to the rapidly growing Church. The hypocritical gang of Sadducean priests who had been in deepest degree responsible for the murder of Jesus, could not tolerate the progress of a sect the corner-stone of whose faith was a belief in His resurrection. They were ready to proceed to severe measures of persecution to prevent the apostles from the preaching of that hated name. Peter and John were called to answer for themselves before the Sanhedrin, and Peter again improved the occasion to proclaim salvation in the name of Jesus. He hurled defiance in the very faces of the murderers of his Master, in the words, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, even by him

doth this man stand before you whole." He anticipated the obvious objection, that the man who had been rejected by the religious leaders of the chosen people could not be the true Messiah, and answered it by an allusion to the familiar words of Psalm 118: "This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner." This psalm was perhaps written for the dedication of the second temple. If not written just at that time, it was undoubtedly used in the services of the second temple not long thereafter. It doubtless refers to some incident in the construction of that temple of which we have no other record. The words had doubtless already become proverbial. Jesus had applied those words to Himself, and, indeed, they found in Him their supreme fulfilment. Yet has it been true again and again in God's progressive revelation that "the stone which the builders refused" has "become the headstone of the corner." Again and again the most important disclosures of divine truth have come from the teachings of those who were despised and rejected of men. Claiming that Jesus was indeed the true Messiah, in whom the prophetic hope of Israel found its fulfilment, Peter declared, "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." And to the demand that thenceforth they

should not speak nor teach in the name of Jesus, the apostles answered, in language worthy to be the watchword of reformers and confessors and martyrs—of all those in every age who have the courage of their convictions and are loyal to the truth that has been revealed to them, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye; for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

The dogmatic interpreters have perverted our text, as they have perverted so many passages of Scripture, and have found in it the doctrine that all except those who have cherished a personal faith in Christ Jesus, conceived either as a historical fact or as a prophetic expectation, are doomed to an eternity of hopeless misery. I do not believe that any such doctrine is taught in our text, or anywhere else in the Bible. If we get to heaven ourselves, we shall doubtless find there many who on earth never heard of the name of Jesus. Such men as Socrates, Zoroaster, and Buddha, as truly as the saints of the Jewish and the Christian world, we may expect to find among our companions. The words "saved" and "salvation," as used by Peter on this occasion, had no direct reference to the future life. The salvation is the Messianic salvation foretold by the Hebrew prophets. As Jesus was the true Messiah, the promised restoration of Israel must come through Him. We

must remember that when Peter spoke these words he was still a Jew. In common with his fellow disciples, he still cherished the expectation of a restoration of the Jewish theocracy. All nations, indeed, were to be blest through Christ, the seed of Abraham; but they were to attain this blessing only by becoming incorporated with the chosen people. Slowly did the Christian Church outgrow its primitive Jewish conceptions. Not until Jerusalem itself went down in fire and blood did the Christian Church really learn that Christianity is not a national, but a universal, religion.

But with these expectations of national restoration there mingled in the mind of Peter other ideas more truly Christian. He had heard the Master say something about a kingdom of God that cometh not with observation —a kingdom of God that is within us. He had felt in his own soul the stirring of a new spiritual life, as he had passed from the dull formality of Judaism into the intense vitality of Christian faith. The life and death and resurrection of Jesus had so taken possession of his soul that all other motives were dwarfed into nothingness in comparison with the supreme motive of loyalty to the Friend who had died for him, and for whom he would gladly die. The new spiritual life which he felt in his own soul he saw manifested in the lives of his fellow-disciples. It flamed forth

in the fire-tongues of Pentecost; it showed itself in the fraternal affection which bound the disciples together as a loving family. For him and his brethren, the inspiration which glorified their daily life was in the name of Jesus, and in that name alone. In that sense the words have come down to us, as true today as when they were first uttered. The inspiration for the noblest development of character in individual and in social life comes from the name of Jesus.

There is a notion somewhat widely diffused that Christ and Christianity have done their work; that they were factors of some importance in the development of that commonwealth of nations which we call Christendom, that type of social and public life which we call Christian civilization; but, now that the world has achieved Christendom and Christian civilization, it has no need of Christ and Christianity. This general notion is held by different people in different ways. There are some who utterly repudiate the supernatural claims of Christ. To them the Jesus of the gospels was an amiable enthusiast, generally self-deceived in His assertions of supernatural claims, but occasionally stooping to the baseness of conscious fraud. His miracles and His resurrection these men relegate to the same category with the myths and legends of paganism. And in their thought the Christian Church has fulfilled its mission. In an old

savage age it was of some use in softening the manners of men, but it has survived its usefulness, and the sooner it vanishes into the limbo of obsolete institutions the better. Others there are who do not so much deny as ignore the supernatural claims of Jesus. They believe the Church may still be useful, provided it will not insist on being too religious. It makes a convenient meeting-place for people of noble aspirations; it is a very convenient agency for the administration of charity. These men accordingly maintain a more or less close alliance with the Church. Many of them have their names enrolled as nominal members of some branch of the Church; they contribute money for its support; habitually, or at least occasionally, they attend its services, though they value the preaching in inverse ratio to the emphasis which is laid upon the distinctive doctrines of Christianity. Still others there are who have never definitely formulated even to themselves their disbelief or their doubt, but who have a vague feeling that, in this age when Christendom and Christian civilization are accomplished facts, it makes very little difference what people believe about Jesus Christ.

I have heard of a juvenile debating society in which was discust the question whether the sun or the moon was the more useful to mankind. One of the champions of the moon argued that that luminary was far more use-

ful than the sun, because the moon shines in the night when its light is needed, while the sun only shines in the daytime when it is light enough anyway. We laugh at the ignorance of the youngster who did not know that all the varied lights that make the beauty and gladness of the world—the azure of the sky, the deep and solemn blue of the ocean, the flower-flecked green of the meadows, the virgin whiteness of the mountain snows—are all only so many reflections of the beams of that sun whose light is the life of the world. But I cannot help thinking that those men make a somewhat similar mistake who imagine that we can have Christendom and Christian civilization without Christian faith and Christian life.

In maintaining, in opposition to all such phases of thought, the truth of Peter's declaration in our text, I wish to call your attention to two propositions: (1) The religious ideas which possess transcendent moral power are those which are connected with the name of Jesus. (2) In the life of the individual and in the collective life of the race, the inspiration for those reforms which are most radical, most fruitful, and most permanent, comes from moral and religious ideas.

The religious ideas which possess transcendent moral power are those which are connected with the name of Jesus. I do not ignore the truth, the religious truth, which

lies outside the pale of Christianity. God has not left Himself without witness in any land or in any time. In all the history of our race He has been the God, not of the Jew alone, but also of the Gentile. In many a land and in many a time He has raised up teachers of truth and righteousness. To the thoughtful mind there is something very affecting in that picture which Paul has given in his noble address at the Areopagus, of the whole human race feeling after God, if haply it may find Him. Only with profound respect can the thoughtful mind contemplate any system of religious belief which has prevailed among men. There is no doctrine so absurd, no rite so fantastic, so cruel, so obscene, but that in it we behold a symbol of some great truth relating to the mysteries of the unseen world. But, while there is religious truth outside the pale of Christianity, it is no less true that the truth revealed in Christ Jesus transcends all other truth in moral power.

I stand in a universe of cosmic forces, vast, measureless, resistless. I feel myself helplessly ground between the iron wheels of a vast machine. Is that machinery of nature as soulless and pitiless as it seems? or is there a spirit in the wheels—a soul of divine pity and love behind the awful manifestation of resistless power? But my puzzled despair in the contemplation of nature comes not alone

from the fact that nature seems pitiless and cruel; yet more from the fact that nature seems utterly unmoral—utterly indifferent to the distinctions of good and evil in human life. The sun shines alike on the evil and on the good; the rain falls alike on the just and on the unjust. And the stern and terrible ministries of nature seem as indifferent as the mild and gentle ones to human virtue and human sin. When the avalanche hurls itself down the mountain side, it asks no questions in regard to the moral character of the people in its way. When the volcano's blast of scalding steam transforms in one moment a populous city into a city of the dead, the volcano pauses not to count whether there be five or ten righteous men in the region that is to be devastated. Is there any moral significance about this world into which we have somehow happened to be born? I turn from the dark, impenetrable mystery of nature, to gaze upon Him who could say, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father"; and from Him I learn that wealth of meaning of law and love in eternal union, embodied in the phrase which has been on our lips since earliest infancy, but which we have so slowly come to understand, "Our Father which art in heaven."

I look into my own life. I find instincts, desires, passions, which clamor for gratification, regardless of the welfare, the feelings, the rights, of my neighbor. Somehow I cannot

help feeling, tho I know not why, that altruism is better than egoism, that self-denial is nobler than selfishness. But, alas! the selfish life is easier; and again and again I find myself lapsing into acts of self-indulgence by which my neighbor is wronged or ruined. I cry in my despair, "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." Shall I keep up the hopeless struggle? or shall I formulate my despair into an accursed philosophy, and declare myself only the helpless creature of heredity and environment, and, having in my creed made myself a beast, shall I live the life of the beast that I have made myself? I gaze on the victim of Calvary, and the struggle in my own heart takes on a new meaning. In that revelation of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, I can no longer think of abandoning the conflict with selfish passion. And the struggle seems no longer hopeless; in that revelation of divine love in sympathy with sinful man there comes into my soul new hope and courage.

I stand in a world of the dying. Day by day some hand that I have loved to grasp drops from my grasp forever. Day by day some voice that has been the music of my soul is hushed in the eternal silence. Nor is it alone the dying of others around me that tells me that I am in a world of death. The warnings of mortality come with increasing clearness in my own body. The hair grows thin

and white, the eye and ear grow less keen, the limbs less strong, the head less steady. I am in a world of the dying; I am a dying man myself. I was born like a beast, I have been nourished like a beast, I must die like a beast —and what beyond? Vainly I strive to peer beyond that veil of mystery and terror. And what matters the question of moral good and evil in our lives, if virtue and sin are only figures in the endless dance of atoms—if our human life is only a transient episode marking a particular stage in the refrigeration of a nebula? I go to the empty sepulcher on the Easter morning, and our human life grows great with the power of an endless life.

The Heavenly Father, the divine love revealed in self-sacrifice, life and immortality brought to light—these are the religious ideas which are bound up in the name of Jesus; and in these is transcendent moral power.

But, in the second place it is true that in the life of the individual and of the race, the inspiration for reforms which are most radical, most permanent and most fruitful comes from moral and religious ideas. For what is the great evil that curses human life? Is it dirt, or poverty, or ignorance, or any other external condition? No, no. The one dreadful disease which blasts our whole race with its terrible contagion is sin. Dirt and poverty and ignorance, and the manifold external ills of humanity, are in

large degree symptoms of that one all-pervading, all-corrupting disease. I do not undervalue the merely palliative treatment by which we may relieve these external ills. Cleanliness is better than dirt, comfort is better than poverty, and knowledge is better than ignorance; and it is worth while to labor to get the community cleaned up, and properly fed and housed, and educated. But after all there is nothing that cures the real disease in every human life that does not address itself to the conscience and work a transformation of character. The one great question in your life and mine is this—What is the supreme purpose for which we are living? Is it selfishness—self-indulgence, in some form, I care not very much how gross or how refined? Or is it loyalty to some ideal above self? A dirty and ignorant saint is far better than a clean and intelligent sinner. Where the purpose of supreme loyalty to righteousness is established in the soul, it gradually transforms all phases of conduct, and transfigures the whole nature with its own glory.

As no genuine reformation of individual life comes otherwise than from the inspiration of moral and religious ideas, so are those ideas the source of the noblest and best reforms in society. I do not claim that all good in modern civilization is due to influences distinctively Christian. Doubtless many valuable reforms have been advocated, and successfully

advocated, on economic or on sanitary grounds; but he must be wilfully blind to the records of history who fails to recognize that, among all the influences which have created Christian civilization, Christianity itself has been transcendent. It is through the fatherhood of God that we reach the conception of the brotherhood of man. It is the conception of the supreme dignity of the human soul, as made in the image of God and redeemed by the grace of Christ, that has inspired the philanthropies of modern civilization, uplifted woman from the degradation of ages, broken the fetters of the slave, compelled the world's rulers to acknowledge that governments exist for the welfare of the governed, and bound the nations together in the great commonwealth of Christendom. The philanthropies that have glorified our modern history would die of inanition without Christian faith.

Ay, and there are dark shadows in the picture of our modern civilization. Do you dare to look squarely at them? Behold a school of literature whose formulated and boasted unmorality is essential immorality. Behold a school of art whose only ideal is the meaningless and shameless display of nakedness. Behold our fashionable society mocking the misery of the poor with balls and banquets whose tasteless and ostentatious extravagance recalls the worst days of the Roman empire.

Behold the greed of monopolistic wealth, taking the opportunity afforded by a famine of coal to raise the price of oil, and distributing fabulous dividends, while poor sewing girls turn down the wicks of their little stoves to save the few cents which lie between them and starvation or ruin. Behold the slaves of our industrial system turning now and then against their oppressors, in Haymarket massacres, and Homestead riots, and colossal strikes paralyzing the business of a continent. Behold our great metropolis falling again and again into the clutches of a gang of men who are in politics for what they can make out of the plunder of society and the blackmailing of protected vice. Behold the insolent domination of the saloon power. Behold the hideous barbarity of Negro lynchings, North, alas! as well as South. Do you realize that the horrors of the Paris Commune belong not to some "old, unhappy, far-off" time, but to the last third of the boasted nineteenth century of Christian civilization? And not in the worst of these things do we see what our civilization might be without religious faith. It is an acute remark of Sir James Stephen: "We cannot judge of the effects of atheism from the conduct of persons who have been educated as believers in God, and in the midst of a nation which believes in God. If we should ever see a generation of men to whom the word God has no meaning at all, we should get a light on

the subject which might be lurid enough." You may plant the slopes of a volcano with vineyards and gardens, but the volcanic fires are there. Our Christendom without Christianity would be but a vine-clad volcano.

I am no pessimist. I am not out of sympathy with the age in which we live. I thank God for the privilege of bearing some humble share in its intellectual, its social, its political life. I glory in the solemn thoughtfulness of its better literature; in the honest fearlessness of its scientific investigation; in its applications of science to human comfort and well-being—its anesthetics and antiseptics, its miracles of steam and electricity; in its restless spirit of adventure and discovery, which has well nigh erased the words "unexplored region" from the map of the globe; in its manifold philanthropies; in its political reforms, its emancipation of opprest races and nations, its embodiment of the idea of human brotherhood in democratic institutions. From the depths of my soul I reverence those men and women whose names are the symbols of the work which our age has accomplished for the uplifting of mankind—its Tennyson and its George Eliot, its Darwin and its Helmholtz, its Pasteur and its Lister, its Watt and its Morse, its Livingstone and its Nansen, its Lincoln and its Gladstone.

But there is one "name which is above every name"; and that is not the name of

any of the men who have made the nineteenth century illustrious. It is the name of a Galilean peasant of the long ago—the name that Peter hurled in defiance in the faces of His murderers. And what did He do to gain that name above every name? He published no book; the only line we hear of His writing was written on the sand. He made no scientific discovery. He told His followers, indeed, to consider the lilies of the field, but He evidently neither knew nor cared anything about their botanical classification. He invented no labor-saving machine; He achieved no scheme of public sanitation; He organized no political party; he wrought no revolution in political institutions. What did He do? He went about doing good. Disease fled from His healing touch, and the wild ravings of the maniac grew still like the waves of Galilee. He always had time to take in His arms any baby whose mother's heart craved a word of blessing. What did He? Nay, rather, what was He? He walked this sin-curst earth, the one white-robed embodiment of perfect goodness. Goodness streamed out of Him, as the radiant energy of heat and light streams out of the sun. In His presence haughty self-righteousness was abashed into humility, and soul-withering remorse dissolved in tears of penitence. Already is His name the name above every name? How will it seem to us when we look at human life from the standpoint of some

other world? We stand in the narrow, crowded streets of modern Rome, and the great dome of St. Peter's seems only a little larger than a dozen other domes. We wander off mile after mile over the Campagna, and those other domes sink out of sight, while the monster of Michelangelo soars up in mountain majesty. So, when we look at human life from some other sphere, that name which seems even now the name above every name, will rise into a majesty beyond all earthly thought. Then those lives will seem to us the greatest—which have accomplished great achievements in literature, science, politics? No, no. Those lives will seem the greatest which have come nearest to the life of Jesus in the spirit of self-forgetful love. As our estimate of the relative value of different lives will change, so will change our estimate of the relative value of different actions in our own lives and in the lives of others. The simple word of counsel or of warning, the tear of sympathy in the eye, the warm pressure of the hand, the cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple, will seem to us greater things than the composing of a masterpiece of literature, the discovery of a law of nature, the invention of a machine that shall revolutionize industrial life, or the achievement of a great political reform.

Whatever else we may be or fail to be, let us be religious! Whatever else we may do or

fail to do, let us walk in the footsteps of Jesus! There is one aspiration that will bring no disappointment; there is one endeavor the joy of whose triumph will never cloy. Walk with Jesus, and on your path will shine

"The light that never was on sea or land."

Walk with Jesus, and in your hearts, amid all earthly turmoil, will reign the peace that Jesus giveth " not as the world giveth."

RIDDLE

GOD OUR HOME

MATTHEW BROWN RIDDLE

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GOD OUR HOME

PROF. M. B. RIDDLE, D.D., LL.D.

"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations."—Psalm 90 : 1.

THIS psalm is not only one of the grandest, but probably one of the oldest, in the Psalter. For while the title ascribing it to Moses is of doubtful value, it bears many marks of great antiquity. Indeed, the text, with which it begins, seems very appropriate for the leader of a people that had no country except in promise, and no home except in hope. To proclaim God as our true home would be fitting for Moses. Yet it is quite as fitting now. The figure is as significant as it is simple; for figurative language is often the most expressive. Real poetry speaks in figures, because it can thus best express its thought and feeling; when poetry does not do this, it is hysterical or meretricious. But in interpreting the poetic language of Scripture, we must assume that the figure used falls short of the divine reality, that instead of subtracting on account of the errors of human language, we are to add to the main thought. When, as in the revelation of the person and work of Christ, figures are accumulated to illustrate one point, then the truth revealed is

more than any or all of the metaphors that describe it. Since then this psalm says, "Lord, a home hast thou been to us, in generation and generation," what God is to us as His people, not only resembles what the best of earthly homes do for us, but greatly surpasses this. In this sense for many hundreds of years God's people have sung this psalm, in this sense they have used it to bury the bodies of those who have gone to this eternal home. The thought has made their earthly homes the better, while it prepared them for the higher enjoyment of the Lord as our dwelling-place.

Let us consider the points of resemblance between a good home and what God becomes to us as His people. It will be necessary of course to speak of what a home ought to be rather than what it sometimes is; of the ideal rather than of the real. Even in discussing the resemblance we must therefore anticipate somewhat the crowning truth, that in God alone is the ideal home made real. The figure falls short of the divine reality.

Home is, or ought to be, a place of love. Out of this grow all the other points of resemblance. In the Scriptural view the family is the unit, and love is the life of it. Take away this, or fail to build on this, and there is no true earthly home. So trite a truth might perhaps be taken for granted, were it not for the practical denial of it which is so common.

Men are destroying the love in their homes by neglecting it in the race for wealth; women are doing the same in the social race. These times are not worse than those that have preceded, yet Satan has a hold on many a so-called home, because love does not dwell there. Houses which are only lodging-places or eating-houses for their owners, or places of entertainment for acquaintances when fashion so demands, are not homes; these do not help us to understand the text. No doubt there are many who seek God, as they do their homes, from a sense of duty or a sense of want, to have their mouths filled or to avoid reproach; yet not because they love to be there. But as reciprocal love makes a home; so to have God as our home, we not only need to know that He is love, but also to love Him in return, to "love him because he first loved us." I do no violence to the text by insisting that this thought underlies it. Its tone is far removed from that of the easy-going religionism that knows nothing of repentance. "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." He who says this can speak of God as a home, only on the ground of God's covenant mercy and faithfulness. The love he sings is love that sacrificially atones, that it may love freely and justly. And by the same method, the love can be reciprocated. Only when we are assured that God Himself can have a holy

love for sinners, will we love Him in return. The only Deity that has evoked self-sacrificing love from men, has been a covenant God who has Himself provided a ransom for His people. If Christianity does not present God as the highest object of affection, to be loved because worthy by those whom He loved, tho unworthy, then Christianity has nothing to present.

If then we hasten our steps to the spot where we know kind hearts and willing hands await us, surely to our God we may go, must go, with willing feet. He who must needs be forced to this privilege, who has no time to pray and commune with God, is not one who can enter into the spirit of this verse, any more than is he who allows either business or pleasure so to absorb him that he goes back with laggard or unsteady step to the place which ought to be most dear. If you do not respond to the love of this revealed covenant-keeping God, then the language of the text is not yours.

Home is a place of shelter. Where love makes our home we have more than a shelter from the weather; we have not only a fireside and a roof, but a refuge from the troubles which spring up outside, a protection from the misunderstandings that meet us in less congenial places; shelter for the heart and mind as well as for the body. In this land, and in these days, when the shop and office are

both literally and figuratively so far from home, this comfort is not so great as it ought to be; but such true homes there are, where all that I have sketched exists in reality, where love shuts out the intruder through the mutual shelter of kindred hearts. So is God a refuge for us, a hiding-place, a shelter from the storm, a covert from the tempest, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The Christian heart can lose its cares in God as its dwelling-place, as truly as a child can feel safe at home in the arms of its mother. Not the doughtiest baron in his moated fortress in the old troublous times had such a shelter as we have in God our home. If we do not now know what this is, when stinging conscience and outward trouble come, we may be put to the test. If in such circumstances we do not go to God for shelter, then the language of the text is not rightfully ours.

Home is a place of supply. Children will perhaps appreciate this best, for there is nothing so trustful, and in some respects so touching and sweet, as the confidence with which our little ones expect their needs to be met in the father's house. And in the same confidence we may regard God as our dwelling-place. When children, we ran home, not only for our meals, but with the expectation that many other needs would be supplied. And many of us can recall the shock when we made the discovery that there were many things we

thought we needed, which our willing parents were unable to supply. So we may daily and hourly go to God to obtain whatever we require. There is no pinch of poverty in that dwelling-place. He opens His hand to feed us, and makes us thirsty only to fill us with His blessings. The only limitation is the merciful kindness of a will that denies but to bless us the more.

Once manna was the food of God's people, but our daily bread is not the less bread from heaven. That experience in the wilderness was a type of the Christian life, and many of us have found out more than that this is a wilderness; we have seen how God spread a table in the desert, supplying not only these lower wants, but the higher ones. If we look over our lives we must acknowledge that in this sense too, He has been our dwelling-place. In our Father's house there is bread enough and to spare.

Home is a place of enjoyment. The truest joys are those found there. I say "truest," because there is a riotous excess which passes for pleasure, sought and found elsewhere. Probably the greatest curse of our social life is the failure to recognize this fact respecting home enjoyments. Even if the supposed claims of religion have been the cause of such a failure in some households, it is not the less a mistake. Now the application of this part of the figure is simple enough: the greatest

curse of our religious life is the failure to find delight in God our dwelling-place. We try to make Him our shelter and supply, and forget that He is our joyous home. But the truest happiness for mortal man, as well as for immortal man, is found in communion with God. It is not for intoxication, home joys rarely are, but an abiding delight in His promise and His presence. It is difficult to define feelings, but whoever can recall coming back from some scene of discomfort or hollow gaiety, to his own fireside, and sitting down there with a peculiar sense of pleasure tempered with repose, will understand the figure of the text as applied to enjoyment in God our dwelling-place. Hereafter we shall have more of it, but even now we have much. Perhaps when we first found this delight we exulted more, even as one does in first occupying an earthly home. But the enjoyment is never the less after the first surprize is worn off; for this home we do not prepare for our own delight; Jesus Christ prepares it for us, leads us to it, and however a limited a part of it we now occupy, it is ours to enjoy forever.

Home is a place of rest. This is so true in the figure, that I need only speak of its application. Rest in God is perhaps that which many of us crave most. Busy, weary so often, we listen most eagerly to the words of the Lord Himself: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you

rest." Out of God, and that now means, out of Christ—there is no rest, no rest for the conscience, no rest in the fight with sin, no rest amid the perplexing questions of life, the doubts about duty, the debates about truth. The only response for an active mind and a live conscience is by dwelling in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is fulness of meaning in the phrases, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty"; "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." Rest and trust are effect and cause. Such rest we need, but we can have it only as we trust. We do not get continuous repose, any more than in our homes; but enough comes to carry us through. The peace of God which passeth all understanding can and does guard our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus sufficiently to assure of the Sabbath rest that remaineth for the people of God. For enjoyment and repose, tho known here, can come in perfection only hereafter.

This leads to the other phase of the subject: God as a home exceeds all earthly figures. Earthly homes, even those that best illustrate what we have in God, may change, may disappoint, may be taken away; but God is unchangeable, satisfying and eternal.

Homes may change; even when they seem

changed for the better we lose by so much the home feeling. Even when, contrary to the rule, we remain long in one, there are constant gaps, now made by death, and anon by gentler hands, but not the less "gaps." The best of homes are of the earth, earthy: but God cannot change. The love, the shelter, the supply, the enjoyment, and the rest, illustrated by the figure of the text, can never fail. Other dwelling-places may lose even these earthly characteristics; they are dependent for their comfort upon the thousand accidents, as we call them, of daily life. They decay, they must be renovated in many ways, and often at the expense of the very sentiment which binds us to them. We must sometimes remove, much against our will; when we are most needing and expecting repose, something invades. How familiar the experience is to most of us! But God cannot be disturbed by these human events. Abiding in Him, as we have been united to Him through Jesus Christ our Lord, we have a home that is unaffected by these constant earthly mutations. The dream of permanence, which makes us resent the changes in the nest we are vainly attempting to feather for ourselves, can become a reality only in Him.

The very best of earthly homes are not fully satisfying, while God is. There never was a time when taste, skill and money were so concentrated as now in household advancement;

so much so, that, like all other praiseworthy things, this has its counterfeit and abuse. In some circles, household art is a mania, and the new vocabulary of its votaries is as full and technical as that of a system of theology. But has all this produced permanent satisfaction? Let those answer who have made the experiment. The stately saloons, the costly conservatories, the art galleries, the bric-à-brac—all these, supplemented by treasures for the mind and luxuries for the palate, never satisfied an immortal soul. Pleasant they are; we are the happier for them, other things being equal; but how rarely are other things equal! Nay, the homeliest home may be fuller of true happiness. But no earthly home can give all we need. Cherish all domestic tastes, make your homes as inviting as you can, multiply all the appliances of household happiness: would that it were all better done; but the soul's great hunger is not stilled by all this. God alone can satisfy us. We will not love home less, but God more, by knowing and remembering this. No, unless there be in that house, a family altar, where loving hearts together find God a dwelling-place, closets where the Christian can commune with Him of the soul's deepest desires, there will be little true gratification. Having Him, even those who are houseless will not be homeless, for when the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness the ark of the Lord, we are told, went before

them "to search out a resting place for them." To dwell in God will make the household not less, but inexpressibly more, dear. And when the home has been invaded, or when we are far from the delightful scenes of early life, having ourselves no continuing city, finding wherever we are some domestic trial, some recurring discomfort, some curtailing of our home delights, God is still ours; and He can fill us with His love.

More than this and best of all, He is our eternal home. Here we find the ground-tone of this stately poem, hallowed by centuries—the eternity of Jehovah, our God and portion, in contrast with the transitoriness of man. What tho our homes were unchanged, what tho they gave entire satisfaction, the day of the great change will come, the hour when our satisfaction must be found in something else. That thought is sufficient to mar the happiness that is solely earth-born. Because we are immortal, made originally in the image of God, we can have no real happiness which has not an eternal basis, no real home save in the eternal God Himself. The dissatisfaction we all feel is a witness to the need of this; the revelation we have from a covenant God is the pledge that our need can be met. Hence he who is Godless is eternally homeless. But having the Lord as our dwelling-place, death is but the passing from these lower homes, whose comfort and pleasures were meant to point to

Him, to the full possession of an eternal home, unchangeable and satisfying.

To have God as our eternal dwelling-place we must find Him our dwelling-place here. If He is worth possessing when we die, He is worth possessing while we live; if He is the one eternal home, He will be the truest home while we are here. Some of us have found Him, trusted and tried Him, and in our turn endorse the words of the text written so many centuries ago. Some have not yet found Him. Remember this—he only builds his true home, who builds for eternity.

RIGGS

DUTY AND FEELING

JAMES STEVENSON RIGGS

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DUTY AND FEELING

PROF. JAMES S. RIGGS, D.D.

"Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you."—Matt. 5 : 44.

JESUS is speaking of the law. With an independence, astonishing to His hearers, He calmly corrects or enlarges current interpretations until a code for outward measurable conduct becomes an illuminating, searching standard of motives. That His hearers may understand, in part at least, what He means by "fulfilling the law" He brings to the light of this standard a few typical prohibitions and behold the "thou shalt not" is seen with warning finger confronting mental attitudes. Anger is germinal murder; unclean eyes reveal a criminal heart. The very devices by which men were accustomed to give assurance of truthfulness—"by heaven," "by Jerusalem," were after all confessions of untruth or of a casuistry which made assurance needful. From such law as this there is no escape. It is as the eye of omniscience upon us. It demands rectitude in the very impulses and action. Its judgments are rigorous and final. Nor is it different when Jesus passes from enlargement in interpretation to correction. Personal vindictiveness is absolutely forbidden. We are even

" to love our enemies." The whole presents a veritable Alpine range of duty. It touches the sky line. As over against some mystical form of Christianity or some theological presentation of it, men sometimes say " the Sermon on the Mount will do for me." It is as if a man needing exercise should say Mont Blanc or the Matterhorn will do. There is no reaching the summit in either case of literal mountain or duty-height without guidance, help, and vigorous self-determination. That is why the Sermon on the Mount is always inadequately estimated when it is called " ethical." It implies and demands the spiritual. It is spiritual from beginning to end.

The text is a command. That is its marked peculiarity. As we ordinarily read it, it seems to put affection under law—the very last thing which law can touch. It seemingly demands the impossible. It looks like an over-refinement of duty. It is too idealistic, so much so as to strike action with paralysis. It fares much as that other command, " be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." Requiring so much it is quietly dismissed with nothing. Christian life, alas! has in it all too many exhibitions of that very attitude against which Jesus was speaking. His " law " here is of far-reaching import. Before we can get the lesson we must see the meaning. The key to it lies in the word " love " itself. The Greek New Testament has two verbs trans-

lated by the verb "to love." One signifies the love of natural inclination—love which is spontaneous, involuntary; the love, *e. g.*, of a parent for a child; of a friend for a friend. The other that love which is the direction of the will, exercised only by resolution and effort; finding its expression in a kind word or deed; untouched it may be by emotion, or even in the face of antagonistic emotion. I do not wish to be understood as saying that the second word which I have defined as "direction of the will" never takes to itself the warmer, richer qualities of the first. I am simply setting forth a primal and real distinction in the terms. To read this text with the first meaning is to convict the Master of an irrational command. Affection can no more be commanded than belief. To love an enemy in the same sense as I love a friend is impossible. Christ nowhere asks us to do it. "Loving" and "praying" in this text are on the same level of exercise. Both are acts of the will. All that the Master requires is that as such they be real, earnest, kindly, and toward those who are filled with ill-will toward us. The distinction is sometimes given in this way: "natural love," *i. e.*, spontaneous affection, and "moral love," *i. e.*, love which is a deliberate act of the will. Or again in this way: the love of complaisance, the love of benevolence. Jesus in effect then says, "If you know anyone who is your enemy—who

hates you—nay more, who is persecuting you, meet his hatred and persecution with deeds of good-will and pray for God's good-will toward him." Even with the relief this interpretation gives we have not brought the duty within the range of easy achievement. The law lies athwart the strongest natural currents of feeling possible to us. It seeks to hold back by the might of a sanctified will such quick-springing passions as anger, revenge, hate, and that too, when they are bitterly and persistently provoked. More than that, it commands the will to listen to none of their suggestions, to yield to none of their plausible persuasions—to act against them resolutely and consistently. Matthew Arnold was accustomed to say that "religion is morality touched by emotion." Here seems to be a bit of religion which is independent of emotion. One may risk even such an uninviting word as "mechanical" in thinking of it. At any rate the text gives us all the elements for the study of an old problem in Christian experience—the problem of the relation of duty and feeling in reference to service and devotion. "Loving one's enemies" marks in typical form the way to the solution in one; praying for those who persecute you the way to the solution, in the other.

Let us take them in order, considering first the problem made by feeling in reference to duty in service. The great words of Christ's

message to us are in the language of the heart. He was constantly talking to men of forgiveness and rest and peace and joy, realities which we cannot dissociate from feeling. Indeed, they cannot be said to be real unless felt. It looks as if religion centered in emotion, after all. But if you look carefully again at the words of Jesus, you will find that He has another way of setting forth a religious life. "Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven," and as He turned to picture the value of such "obedience" he made it as the rock which held the house secure against the rain-gusts and the flood. There must be an inner harmony here. And it is just in this that there is not a heart word in the whole vocabulary of the Master, whose meaning can be obtained but by the strenuous way of the will. Even faith means self-surrender. Were this not so the cheap fervors and superficial ecstacies of emotional excitement might put in a claim for recognition. With the rhythm of adaptable music and the magnetism of a crowd we might be made to think that we had entered into the secret of them all—to find ourselves at last back on the old level worse for the reaction. I once saw a child take up a violin, run his small fingers up and down the strings as best he could and draw the bow. The sensitive instrument responded to every

touch. But the little hand had no skill, and the unrelated sounds—some harsh and strident, some clear and sweet, had only the potentiality of music. In after years the same hand obedient to the laws of harmony compelled the same instrument to sing its glorious music to one's very heart and the harmony was a revelation. In some such relation as that does the emotional nature within us stand to the intelligent will which under Christ's revelation of the laws of the harmony of righteousness, may compel those feelings to reveal the sweetest music of life. I have often thought in my day-dreams of heaven that that is what its music really means—the profound harmony of our emotions with the will of God. But here and now these same emotions are bound up with the nerves that are often exposed to the ruthless touch of clumsiness and malevolence, and Christians tho we profess to be, we give back harsh and sometimes distressing responses. The dominance of a " moral affection " is not over us. The disappointments, the sorrows, the rivalries and the hatreds of life are not being used for discipline. We meet them not with the high purpose of making them give us new notes in harmony of righteousness, but let them work in us the tumult of baffled desire or the unloveliness of reciprocal passion. That which in us could tell the world most clearly of the spirit of heaven is alas! speaking in the accus-

tomed tones of earth. How well we all know the easy possibility of rebellion and of anger and of bitterness, when we had been suddenly stopt in our way by an unexpected sorrow or sickness, or when we have been unjustly or ungratefully treated! He who gives us life each day knows how these experiences plow into our feelings—hurting us away down deep. He knows too how that hurt, if rightly accepted, can cause the rebellion and anger and the cruel prejudice to melt away as ice under the sunshine of the springtime.

My life is but a field
Stretched out beneath God's sky
Some harvest rich to yield.
Where grows the golden grain,
Where faith—where sympathy?
In a furrow cut by pain.

It is just here that the problem we are considering emerges in its full length and strength. Experience has in some way touched us either to awaken us to hot antagonism or to bring us to sullen settled opposition. The voice of feeling is "Let me meet it with its kind." Jesus turns away from the excitable and heated emotion to the imperious will and says, "Do you accept it"; if it be the hatred of an enemy, by doing good to him in the face of your feelings until they, ashamed and instructed, shall learn a heaven-taught lesson; if it be a sorrow or a disappointment, by saying "Speak, Lord for thy

servant hearest," and then commanding the passions to be still that you may hear. This is verily the religion of Jesus Christ, given to us neither from the cold lips of an untried life nor from the pitiful struggles of some monkish cell, but with the accents in it of Gethsemane, where through an agony of feeling Jesus walked straight on to the cross amid whose cruel sufferings and injustice He cried out, " Forgive them for they know not what they do." How much we are losing if we are not trying to follow that difficult path! How narrow we are making our experience if we are doing for Christ only what we like to do—only that which carries with it the superficial emotion of a sort of religious dilettantism! And the saddest thing about it all is that what in cherished prejudices, nourished resentments and determined rebelliousness seems gain is pitiable loss. There is no clearer exhibition of this than in the very conditions in which Jesus spoke the words of the text. Gladly had the Jews accepted the teaching of those who said " Thou shalt hate thine enemy." Their hatred gave blood-red wings to their fancies and they dreamed of that time, to quote the book of Enoch, " when the horses should wade knee-deep in the blood of their enemies and the chariots should sink to the wheel-rim in gore from their destruction." Even at the time when Jesus was preaching the Sicarius, with his murderous

dagger under his cloak, was watching his opportunity to stab in the back a Roman or a Roman-sympathizing Jew, and when at last Jerusalem lay in hopeless ruin and her streets and surrounding valleys were full of the slaughtered of her own people, it was all but a commentary on that perdition-inspired injunction, "Thou shalt hate thine enemies." That, written large, is the inevitable issue of such a principle. "I wonder who will kill me to-day," was the first morning question of the savage in Uganda when Mackay began to preach Jesus' reversal of the African's natural course toward his enemies. This law of love must be unquestioningly accepted in the face of the strongest feeling. Duty, and by that I mean such duty as meets us in the explicit words of the Master, waits upon no mood. If feeling will not go with it, then it must go alone. It dare not, except at the expense of disobedience and loss, take its excuse for inaction, from the plausible objections of wounded vanity, or disappointed hope, or greedy jealousy, or rebellious sorrow. You say that is "mechanical piety." So be it. Self-mastery is bound to have a mechanical element in it. It is thus but in line with all mastery that is worthy. The discipleship of James and Peter and John in Galilee meant long walks, sometimes with heavy hearts. Another has tersely said, "We become better than we are by doing better than it is in our

heart to do." I have seen a man become glad to give who regularly for a long time opened his hand against the dictates of an avaricious heart. A friend once said to me regarding his friend, "Naturally self-centered, he is religiously unselfish." These are some of the finer harmonies which come when "will" undertakes, with God's help, the discipline of feeling, meeting that which is hostile with Christ's law of action, "Love your enemies." Under the out-working of such a law life grows generous, broad, noble.

The other phase of the problem is that which is made by feeling in reference to duty in devotion. "Pray for them that persecute you." If a Jew mentioned a Roman in his petitions it was to bring down upon him the curse which he could not make too sweeping. It never occurred to him that God could do anything with those Gentiles that would meet the ends of righteousness, but destroy them. Imagine the amazement with which this command was received, having no exception in its application. Every Jewish feeling was antagonized at once. The very attempt to pray such a petition would discover the grip of the hatred. And yet he was to pray that God would be gracious to and would enlighten the very foe who had lost no opportunity to show his contempt for the Temple ritual and for the obstinate race that made him a necessity up there, on the Judean hills. There is some-

thing in prayer—especially when the petition is specific—which brings quick self-revelation. A man cannot take to God something as definite as an enemy without finding out his own position. He enters upon a real contest with feeling or he will give up his petitioning. I am referring to secret prayer. When a man has gone so far in obedience to the will of the Master—mechanical tho the beginning may be—that he can throw athwart the resentful feelings which another's enmity calls forth a prayer for the good of that enemy, he has done much to quiet the feelings themselves. But prayer is more than petition, and devotion is a larger theme than either, and I wish to see for a moment how the problem of will and feeling presents itself here. The principle of action, which is given in Christ's command comes to light in our spiritual exercises as well as in our personal relationship—only the feelings are not along the same line. It is not now hatred and resentment that cause the will an effort, but it may be eager ambitions, absorbing pleasures or worse than all, moral sloth. We wait for the mood for prayer and thus having given feeling the right of way, the mood becomes more and more uncertain until a life may become virtually prayerless. Whatever prayer may mean to the Mohammedan it is unquestionably to his advantage, if he seeks to be faithful, that the muezzin's calls ring out over the city at stated times

calling him to prayer. With every earnest spiritual trumpet call that has of late years sounded in our land there has come the summons to definite times for devotion. Now it is "the morning watch"; now it is "the twilight hour"; now it is some special moment in the busy hours of the day. These have been as Christ's command to the "will" to put itself in opposition to the devotionless feelings, and mood or no mood to come into touch with the unseen. It seems like a sufficient reason for refraining from prayer that one does not feel like it, but if the real reason for praying be that we may keep alive the sense of the unseen by presenting definitely to our minds the thought of God and our relations to Him, then it does not belong to feeling to decide. Devotion is an integral part of our spiritual education and education in no realm can take its dictates from feeling. It is my duty to pray and I shall come nearer the expression of my Master's will if I have my times for prayer and when they come, whether I feel like it or not, command myself to devotion. Not long since in conversation with an earnest strong man upon this topic, he said to me in his own vigorous way, "At times I have to take myself by the nape of the neck and force myself upon my knees." That battle with feeling has often been rewarded by an uplift of soul which tells how good obedience is. Your experience has been ex-

ceptional if you have never come to the hour of devotion with sluggish desire or with positively antagonistic mood. Do you suppose you had more to overcome than the Jew who must pray for the Roman? Can the Master say, Wait until the mood passes? Would He not rather say, Face the mood with the strength of resolute purpose and make your feeling come into line with duty?

There is a good deal said in modern religious literature of the "higher life." The phrase is suggestive of a fulness of experience which every earnest Christian would like to have, but what is this fulness of experience? Is it the serenity of an unshadowed faith accompanied by such an equipment of spiritual graces as makes service always a delight? Is it some form of spiritual exaltation which keeps us above the struggles which come from self and sin? If so then I fear the most of us have missed it. In the very nature of things all accounts of such a life are "suspicious" which throw the emphasis upon states of feeling. It would be indeed a libel upon a Christian life to picture it as a joyless barren service, a prolonged wearying stretch of emotionless duty. That it is not. But here as elsewhere feeling is an incident, a result, the outcome of a discipline—not to be sought for in itself, but to be taken as the issue of duty done, of service rendered. In a recent book on this very subject I find sentences like this:

"No ideal of the highest life is safe which is not stiffened through and through by the highest ideal of duty." "It is a moral duty to be devoutly pious and a pious duty to be morally faultless." (Highest Life, pp. 76, 80.) The highest life is the faithful life. In all this there is a world of comfort for you and for me. We are all of us capable of the most unchristlike feelings. The shifting, kaleidoscopic changes of life play upon our emotions as the wind upon harpstrings. In a single day's experience we may swing through the whole gamut of feeling—from joy to blackest anger, from peace to the tumultuous upheaval of sorrow, from aspiration to rebellious refusal. It is not the entrance of anyone of these feelings that determines the character of your Christian life. It is what you do with the feeling when you find it there. Prayer for an enemy is no denial of the fact that he is an enemy. Had Christ conditioned the genuineness of our faith upon the absence in our lives of unworthy feeling He must needs have remade us through and through. He has left to us this sensitive responsive part of our nature and bidden us discipline it. Even "love," that exalted word, in the New Testament means "choose," "decide," "do," rather than feel. And he is best serving Christ who, in the face of moods, through moods as well as when without moods, does what Christ is teaching us we should do.

ROBERTSON

THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF THE VISION OF CHRIST

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THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF THE VISION OF CHRIST

PROF. A. T. ROBERTSON, D.D.

"But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord the Spirit."—2 Cor. 3 : 18.

THE verse chosen for discussion is the culmination of the argument in 2 Cor. 3 : 4-18. Paul is engaged in setting forth the glories of the Christian ministry. He had been in the depths of despondency while at Troas over not seeing Titus (2 Cor. 2 : 12). In Macedonia, however, he had met Titus who greatly refreshed his spirit by the news from Corinth. As a result Paul's spirit rebounds to its normal buoyancy, if it does not go higher than normal (2 Cor. 2 : 14). Under the spell of this new enthusiasm Paul discourses at length concerning the dignity and glory of the Christian ministry. He casts no reflection upon the ministry of the Old Testament dispensation. That was glorious indeed. But the moon gets its light from the sun and fades before it. In the verse here under discussion he broadens the treatment to include all Christians ("we all") and

touches the fundamental thing—Christian experience, the believer's relation to Jesus.

The verb "transformed" is the heart of the verse and it is in the present tense. It is therefore a process that is here described. The metamorphosis, to use the exact Greek word, is not yet complete. The work has been begun, the end is still ahead. It is noticeable that Paul here, as often, appeals to the common experience of believers in Christ. His own theology was grounded securely—his own great experience of grace. The subject that naturally presents itself, therefore, is the transforming power of the vision of Christ. The text will respond to several questions:

Into what are we transformed? The answer is, "into the same image." Whose image? It is clearly the Lord's image whose glory the disciple beholds. By "the Lord" here, as is usual with Paul, is meant the Lord Jesus. The Christian then is represented as transformed into the likeness of the Lord Jesus. One cannot doubt that the apostle has in mind the creation of man's spirit in the likeness of God. That likeness has been greatly marred by sin, but not wholly destroyed. Jesus has come to restore the image of God in men.

The implication is that the image needs restoration. A new artist must work upon the old picture, now so badly injured. If it be replied that evolution has overthrown this

doctrine of man's likeness to God and fall from that likeness, one may reply that this is not so certain. I am perfectly willing to assume evolution as a working hypothesis or as a fact. I am sure that God made the universe in His own way. It is too late now for our theories to alter the facts. If God brought the bodies of men up by way of monkeys there is nothing in that process to cause protest on the part of a believer in God. Besides it is entirely possible to have a lapse into sin after a rise from a lower state. The spirit of man is all that is claimed to have been made in the likeness of God. It is not shown to be impossible for that likeness to come at a high stage in the process of evolution. Indeed evolution is in perfect harmony with that conception. Sin comes with moral consciousness. Sin is a fact. When did it enter the life of man? Certainly not before moral consciousness. There is plenty of room for the "fall."

It is a fact to-day that many men and women do undergo the transformation claimed by Paul as a reality. Christianity makes the appeal to life. It is life. The change took place in Paul's day and takes place now. Men are down. They can be lifted up. Christ lays hold of the spirit of man, which was made in the image of God, and restores the likeness to the Father. Christianity to-day stands the scientific test of experience. The great doctrine of grace is in perfect accord with mod-

ern knowledge. Life is always open to this appeal. Paul was certain that he and others were being transformed into the image of the Lord Jesus and so of God.

How is the transformation wrought? Here the answer is twofold: "Beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord," and "from the Lord the Spirit." There are two factors in the great change, the divine and the human. There is some doubt as to the exact meaning in both of these phrases, but the central fact remains true in each instance. It is not clear whether we should translate "Spirit of the Lord," or "the Lord the Spirit." The order of words in the Greek favors the American Revision. In this sense the deity of the Holy Spirit is asserted and, in a sense, almost identity with Jesus. But the point of importance is that the great change is wrought by the Holy Spirit. This is the basal doctrine of regeneration. The new birth is the truth here firmly set forth. Evidently Paul held the same opinion as the Lord Jesus on this matter. He had no sympathy with the common "fads" of the time which denied the reality of sin and the need of such a radical course. The modern "Christian Science" has some of its roots in the Oriental cults of Paul's time. The term "mind-cure" has one element of truth at least. Some minds certainly need a "cure." But it is very difficult for a diseased mind to cure itself. The other point

here is found in the word "beholding." This word is ambiguous and may mean "reflecting." But even so, it reflects what falls upon it. This is the human side of the matter. The heart of the believer must turn to the Lord. The sinner looks upon Christ. As he beholds the glory of the Lord the change is wrought. The Lord draws him away from himself. He gazes upon the majesty of Christ. Thus no mere human expedients will satisfy the conditions. Reformation will come, of course, but mere reformation will not cause this inward change. Ascetic practises will not necessarily lead to the life of piety. Self-torture may lead away from Christ. Hence no church, no ordinance, no priest, no creed must come between the soul and his Lord. It is the vision of Christ Himself in His glory that brings the wondrous transformation. This is the Pauline principle. All Christians are priests in this holy place. The soul of man finds God in Christ, is won back to God by the sight of Christ, is made like God by communion with Christ, who is God. This is the fellowship with the eternal God that saves the soul from sin.

Is the change instantaneous or gradual? It is both. It is an act and a process. Regeneration is an act, sanctification is a process. Both are in view here. "Beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord" we "are transformed." The new life springs up in the

heart that looks upon Jesus as Lord and Savior. The new life grows as the soul continues to look upon Jesus. He is the bread of life, the true manna from heaven. There must be constant fellowship with Jesus if the growth is to be normal and wholesome. Sporadic looking means imperfect development. James in his Epistle (1 : 24) pictures the mere hearer who " beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was." " But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blest in his doing " (James 1 : 25).

The law of environment applies to the spiritual world. Birds, butterflies, snakes, rabbits, often become like their surroundings. Nature protects from harm or equips for conflict as the case may be. The Christian is inevitably influenced by his surroundings. It is the law of life. It was the main concern of Jesus in His prayer for the disciples (John 17) that they might be in the world, but not of it. Two great laws are in conflict. The spiritual plant is brought as an exotic into an unspiritual environment. If it is left alone, disaster will come. Jesus promises to be with the disciples. He will create a new environment " in the world, but not of it." Never alone can the work of transformation be carried on in the Christian. Never alone can

the world itself be transformed. The only hope that the Christian has is to be in constant fellowship with Jesus. He must not wander from "base" as the children understand in their games. In a word, if one aims to be like God he must live with God. If he is not at all like God, he cannot help the world back to God. The Christian then is constantly drawn away from God by the very world that he is endeavoring to lead to God. The drowning man seeks to destroy his rescuer.

Will the change last? Will it be permanent? The answer of Paul is in the words "with unveiled face." The Christian has no need of a veil upon his face. Moses indeed (2 Cor. 3:7) put a veil over his face as he came down the mount that the people might not see the glory fade from his countenance. He had been upon the mount with God. He was afraid that the glory upon his face would not last. The Christian is free from that fear. "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" or freedom from apprehension on that score. The glory remains on the face of the Christian for he is in constant fellowship with God in Christ. He continually beholds the glory. He continually reflects the glory. Thus both ideas of the word come round. He needs no veil. The change is a permanent one. It will last.

What is the destiny of the Christian? It is "from glory to glory." The best is yet

ahead. We go from grace to grace, from strength to strength, from glory to glory. That is our destiny. Here is an answer to the professional "perfectionist." He is the only one who has discovered his "perfection!" The culmination is still ahead. The goal is indeed the fulness of God. Will there not be progress in heaven? Sometimes indeed a saint may be granted here a foretaste of the glory that is to be. Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration is a case in point. Stephen also "saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God" (Acts 7 : 55). No wonder that the bystanders had already noticed that his face shone as the face of an angel (Acts 6 : 15). Sometimes an aged saint, a mother in Israel, has the glory of God on her face, she has looked so long upon the face of the Lord. Mont Blanc will catch the light of the sun after his light has paled from the hills, and cast it upon the country round —the glorious Alpine after-glow. I once saw this beautiful sight on Lake Geneva. It was like a glimpse of the other world.

The mirror is something to be grateful for. But for the mirror we might not see God at all. But the mirror is not like the person himself. "For now we see in a mirror darkly; but then face to face" (1 Cor. 13 : 12). "That will be glory for me" indeed to look upon His face, to see Jesus as He is. The Christian life thus begins with a look. The

life is developed by looking at Jesus, living with Him. The consummation will come with a look. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). That is it, "We shall be like him." We are somewhat like Christ now. Then we shall have the full family likeness of the household of God. The final reason for John's faith is that "we shall see him even as he is." That is enough.

John Jasper, the famous negro preacher of Richmond, Virginia, used to tell a dream. He dreamed that he went to heaven, and sat down just inside the gate. After a while he was asked by an angel if he did not want to come up closer and see the glories of heaven. "Do you not want your golden crown, John Jasper? Do you not want your harp and your white robe?" "Oh, yes," he answered, "but not yet. Time enough for all that. But now just let me stay where I am ten thousand years and gaze and gaze and gaze at the face of Jesus."

ROBINSON

THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST

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THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST

PROF. GEORGE L. ROBINSON, PH.D., D.D.

"Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."—John 19 : 19.

THESE words upon the cross were an accusation against Christ. "Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross and the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." It seems striking, when we think of it, that our Lord should have been crucified as king, when by the very act of His sacrifice He was performing His priestly office and, at the same time, fulfilling His own prophecy. Yet in three languages over His cross were written the words, "Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews."

The word "king" signifies sovereignty, authority, power; and traced to its origin seems to denote one to whom superior knowledge has given superior power. In the civil world various other words are employed to designate the sovereigns of particular states. Thus there is the "shah" of Persia, the "sultan" of Turkey, the "emperor" of China, and formerly there were the "dey" of Algiers, and the "doge" of Venice. Jesus was called "king." We are accustomed to think of Him as Savior and too little to con-

template Him as king, yet the Bible clearly sets forth His kingship. The Gospel of Matthew especially emphasizes His regal power. The writer of this gospel evidently sought to prove to the unbelieving Jews that Jesus was their expected king. The Old Testament had long before declared the coming of a monarch. In Genesis He is denominated "lawgiver": "The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet until Shiloh come: and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

The prophet Isaiah invests Him with judicial and executive functions: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulders. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom to order it and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever." Daniel ascribes to Him eternal and unlimited dominion over all: "And there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." David enthrones Him at the right hand of God: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

Christ Himself claimed kingly authority. The Sermon on the Mount resounds with those commanding words: "But I say unto you." "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you." As Jesus went up and down through Galilee, He said to one and another, "Follow me," and His disciples followed Him. To the sick He said, "Arise"; to the dead Lazarus, "Come forth." His great commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," was based upon His kingly authority. In all His teaching and in all His words there was an air of command. The gospel picture we have of Him is quite the contrast of king or prince, yet, as has been said, "All his words were kingly, all his acts a succession of the kingliest deeds, decisions, commands." When He preached, He spoke with authority; when He taught He showed divine wisdom, and when He healed, He evinced divine power. Christ needed no excuse and made no apology. He was a ruler and He came to rule; He was a monarch and He performed the functions of a monarch; He was a king and He spoke like a king.

Christ was recognized as king. On the first

day of what we call "Passion week," He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. That day saw His formal inauguration as king of the Jews. His humanity was then exalted. Starting from Bethany, He was borne on an ass' colt—not upon a war-horse, but an animal the symbol of peace—over the Mount of Olives, down across the valley of the Kedron on the way to the Holy City. It was Passover week. Thousands of Jews had come up from all parts of the Roman Empire to attend the feast. The city was crowded to its utmost. Our Lord was escorted by His disciples. As He approached the city, throngs came out to meet Him. Multitudes gazed with eager eyes from lofty eminences. The city began to resound with the cries and shouts of the people. Branches of palm trees were broken down and strewed before the new monarch. Adoring followers spread their garments in the way that the new-hailed king might tread upon them. The shout of hosannas to the Son of David rent the air. Jesus was entering the capital. We read much of the pomp and splendor with which earthly kings are escorted through their realms. History relates that the way before the conquering Xerxes, as he led his troops across the bridge over the Hellespont, was strewed with green branches of myrtle while the incense of burning spices and aromatic perfumes filled the air. Travelers, even in these modern days, tell of Per-

sian rulers passing in wonderful pageants along a road of roses miles in extent, and of glass vessels with symbols of mysterious fashion—tokens of supreme prosperity—broken at every step beneath the horses' feet. But look at Christ's retinue! What a resplendent pageant! Look at the crowded capital! Hear the people cry hosannas to their triumphal monarch! Watch the jealous rabbis as they endeavor to hush the exultant throng. Jesus is making His triumphal entry and the world is for the first time beginning to grasp the meaning of His person and work.

And yet the admiring hosts only saw in Him His temporal power. Even His disciples understood not the spiritual import of His kingship. They had but a vague conception of the kingdom of heaven. By the "kingdom of God" a Jew understood human society perfected, where God was visible and ruled. They failed to comprehend His spiritual rule; they failed to acknowledge His divine lordship; they failed to recognize Him as the great king and head of the Church. Christ was more than temporal king. His loyalty commenced in heaven's eternal purpose. He was to be monarch of men's hearts as well as minds. He was to be the governor and controller of human destiny. Not only this, but He was to reign in love. He was to be a king of love. He was to win His followers through love. He was to found His kingdom on love.

Napoleon, conversing in exile one day at St. Helena, as his custom was, about the great men of antiquity and comparing himself with them, said: "Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded great empires, but upon what did the creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His kingdom upon love, and to this day millions would die for Him." True indeed! Upon love Jesus established His monarchy. His empire is a monarchy of love, not a democracy, not a republic, but an absolute monarchy based upon supreme loyalty to Him, and governed throughout by love. Broad and extended, yet never exceeding the limits of love. This is Christ's kingdom, and this is the manner of His government; a kingdom worthy of a human, and worthy, also, in every way of a divine Christ.

Let us consider briefly His kingly offices: Earthly kings exercise various functions. In a word, they make subjects, found kingdoms, govern their people, protect and defend their empires, and conquer their enemies. Our Lord has similar functions. Our catechism tells us that "Christ executeth the office of a king in subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies."

As a king, therefore, Christ's first office is the subjection of His people. Such is the natural condition of the human heart, that

without the almighty power of a divine ruler men would not be brought into subjection. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Men are obstinate and refused to be governed, and it requires kingly power and kingly love to conquer such rebellious hearts. Yet Christ effects His purpose and men become His loyal subjects. Paul is a good example of such subjection. He was on his way to Damascus. His heart was set against Christianity. His mission was to visit the synagogs and bring any disciples of Christ that he might find bound unto Jerusalem. He was, therefore, in absolute rebellion against the Savior. But, "suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about him, and he fell unto the ground and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Not until he heard the voice from heaven was his heart changed. Not until the divine effulgence was manifested to Paul in miraculous power did he inquire, "Who art thou, Lord?" Not until Paul was smitten to the earth was he led to ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" Then it was the King of men softened Paul's heart; then it was that Christ conquered his rebellious will; then it was that Paul became the *doulos,* purchased servant, of Jesus Christ. Even so Christ subdues us. He speaks with authority to the conscience. He questions our lives; He interro-

gates our motives; He visits us in secret; He speaks to us when alone; He follows us into the darkness; He haunts our slumbers; He makes us dissatisfied with self; and He reveals Himself to us in such a way that He conquers our stubborn wills, wins our rebellious hearts, and makes us His obedient and willing subjects. This is the first work of the Christ-king.

As a king, Christ rules his people. After the Macedonian had conquered the East, after the renowned Roman had subjected the world, after the hero of France had overrun Europe, their common difficulty was to know how to govern. To have left those foreign nations to govern themselves would have meant disloyalty and revolt. So in the kingdom of grace. The great King does not leave us to govern ourselves. Having become citizens of His realm, we are placed under new laws, bound by new obligations and subject to new restrictions. We are citizens of a new commonwealth. "Old things have passed away." New thoughts, better feelings, higher aspirations are our possession. Duties that once we deemed a burden now become a joy. Things we once hated, now we love. Whenever He calls, we are ready to obey. We are no longer our own masters. We belong to His moral empire. He gives laws and He expects obedience. He holds the right and He demands the service of every human life. "His will be-

comes the common rule of all; His life our common motive; His glory our common end." He governs in righteousness. He fills our hearts with love. He infuses into us a feeling of sympathy. He makes us philanthropic. He rids us of social selfishness. He inspires us with Christian fellowship. He delivers us from caste. He allays strife. He promotes peace. He opens up before us the great avenues of Christian love; strengthens us in weakness, comforts us in sorrow; corrects us when sinful; and helps us and encourages us in times of perplexity and discouragement—all for the praise of His glorious name. Christ governs, and His government is a government of love; Christ reigns, and His reign is a reign of love.

Again, Christ protects His people from their enemies. His citizens are surrounded by adversaries on every side. Foes from within and without beset the child of God. Sin, Satan, the world and the grave are all enemies of Christ's subjects. His people are continually being tempted; but, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations." He has promised to do so. To the Church of Philadelphia he declared: "I will keep thee from the hour of temptation." And again, Paul says: "God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape that ye may be able to bear."

Christ unhesitatingly told those entering His kingdom that, "they should be hated of all men for his name's sake." But He added, "There shall not a hair of your head perish." He it is who "is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy; the only wise God our Savior," and King. He it was who "delivered the apostle out of the mouth of the lion." He it was who enabled martyrs to die with feelings of triumphant victory in their hearts, and made them ready and willing to be burnt at the stake or be tortured in body on the rack because of their confidence in His protection. Just so He will protect us. If we are loyal subjects of King Jesus, nothing can overcome us. "Even the gates of hell shall not prevail against us." Sin shall not have dominion over us. Through Him will come salvation. Through Him we shall have the victory. What blessed assurance have His people! What secure protection! What perfect safety in the empire of such a sovereign! What unspeakable joy under the governorship of Jesus!

But He does more than subdue, control and defend His subjects: Christ restrains His own and His peoples' enemies. The birth of this monarch made the great Herod tremble upon his throne. Christ's reply to Satan: "Get thee hence" thwarted further temptation. His rejoinders in the temple silenced the

priests and elders of the people. His "woes" recorded in Matthew caused the Pharisees and hypocrites to falter and retreat. And to-day His voice, speaking through the conscience, checks the enemies of the cross in their wicked plots to overthrow the Church. He strikes terror into wicked hearts. Rebels become cowards in carrying out their schemes against the children of God. Their hearts fail them in prosecuting their plots against the citizens of the kingdom of Christ. Wicked men falter when they come to the threshold of righteousness. The wretch trembles when he reaches the crisis of his contemplated crime. Sin totters as it undertakes to ruin the child of God. The Psalmist says: "When the wicked even my enemies and my foes came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell." Christ restrains and intimidates His enemies. He frustrates the assaults of sin. How? By the barracks and castles and fortresses, I mean the churches, chapels and cathedrals, reared in all parts of the world for the drill and discipline of His soldiers; by the immense fortifications of holiness—the schools of the prophets—erected against the onsets of Satan; by the lighthouses planted along the coast, by which are meant the sailors' rests and hospitals and other charitable institutions to be found in almost every quarter of the globe; by the war-ships sent out into the enemy's territory, by which I

mean the missionaries of the gospel who have gone forth to battle for truth; by the standing army of the Church of Christ, with its ministers and officers, its Sabbath-school teachers and Christian workers; who stand armed with the whole armor of God, their loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, on their arms the shield of faith, on their heads the helmet of salvation, and in their hands the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God; confronted by these, the adversaries of Christ's kingdom hesitate and grow faint at heart; before these the world becomes weak, vice is restrained, the evil one is thwarted, Satan stand dumb, every adversary trembles, and Christ's people are made to prosper. I verily believe that there is enough wickedness in the world to overthrow the Church were it not for the restraining power of King Jesus.

As a king Christ conquers His own and His peoples' enemies. Restraining is not sufficient. The enemy must be completely overthrown. This is the final achievement of our King. Christ is a conqueror. His kingdom is an eternal kingdom. "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us," but Christ is a conqueror of kings. No wea-

pon formed against His kingdom shall prosper. The contest which once seemed doubtful will then betoken His victory, and it will be a complete victory. At His name, "every knee shall bow of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth: and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." All the agents of Satan, all devils, "Beelzebub the sovereign of devils, Lucifer the brilliant devil, Mammon the money devil, Pluto the fiery devil, Baal the military devil," all will fall prostrate before His conquering power. Before Him the nations will bow, for He will come as judge. At His feet angels and archangels will kneel. "A crown will be given to him as he goes forth conquering and to conquer"; "and great voices" will be heard "in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign forever and ever." We read of the triumphs of the Cæsars; of the triumphal arches erected in ancient Rome in honor of returning conquerors. But compare with these the triumph of Jesus. Behold the heavenly Cæsar, as saints and angels celebrate His universal victory! For Him the arch of triumph is nothing less than the arc of heaven itself; His city, the heavenly Jerusalem; His triumph a universal celebration. "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents, the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

Yea, all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall serve him. He shall have dominion from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust." "All things shall be put in subjection under his feet." "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." The last enemy shall be conquered. As victor, He shall reign, and to Him will be ascribed glory, and majesty, and power for ever and ever.

Let us pause and contemplate such a victory. Let us picture to ourselves that celestial coronation scene. Jesus our King seated on the throne of heaven, surrounded with glory, His kingdom universal, His enemies under His feet, Satan vanquished, earthly magistrates and potentates, sages and kings, armies and emperors, bowing submissively before Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords; hymns of praise chanted by the heavenly choir; tributes of adoration by the saints clothed in white; His elect singing hallelujahs to Him that sitteth upon the throne of God most high, and worshiping multitudes raising their voices in songs of triumph, as God the Father places upon His brow the crown of victory. What a glorious coronation! What a supreme triumph! What an unparalleled victory! Oh, Jesus, thou art the monarch of the skies, thou art king of heaven and of earth!

RYDER

THE PENALTY OF SUCCESS

WILLIAM HENRY RYDER

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THE PENALTY OF SUCCESS

Prof. William H. Ryder, D.D.

"Verily I say unto you, they have their reward."—Matt. 6 : 2, 5, 16.

In the first part of the sixth chapter of Matthew, Jesus admonishes His disciples to avoid the errors of the Pharisees, who give alms and offer prayers and practise fasting in an ostentatious spirit, that they may win the attention and applause of men. He enforces this admonition in each case by a motive thus exprest: "Verily I say unto you, they have their reward." If we read these words thoughtfully we must be impresst with the difference between this motive and the motives with which preachers generally enforce their warnings. We are usually urged to guard against vanity, self-seeking and self-assertion, because the efforts to gain the rewards of such selfishness are liable if not certain to fail. Vanity will make you ridiculous, the preacher says: self-seeking will make you disliked: self-assertion will win men's contempt. You will fail to gain the very things which you are seeking. Jesus says: Do not these things because you are liable to succeed. You see about you men who are doing them and succeeding, therefore, be ye not

like them. Jesus sometimes showed in vivid colors the folly and ultimate ruin of a sinful life; but He also recognized the fact that in this world holy living sometimes brings sorrow, and selfishness gains the rewards it seeks. His desire to impress men with the folly of sin and to save them from it, did not lead Him to ignore or to conceal the facts of life.

For it is a fact that many men who, like these Pharisees of old, are zealous in self-seeking, gain their ends. The world, taken as a whole, is a goodnatured world, and it has a passion for hero-worship. The man who does unusually well the thing in which the community in which he lives is especially interested, is quite sure to get all the credit which he deserves. In Galilee and Judea, in the days of Christ, religion was the most interesting and popular subject of thought and effort. To know how to make minute distinctions between what was lawful and what was unlawful, and to give authorities for such distinctions, was sure to gain the reputation for learning and ability. To be scrupulous in religious habits, faithful in alms-giving, fastings and prayers, made a man a great man in the circles in which the Pharisees desired the reputation for greatness. In efforts to gain such a reputation, there may have been some envy and jealousy among the competitors themselves, but the religious people looked upon them all with simple admiration. The

man who had sufficient force of purpose to make a strenuous and persistent effort, might feel quite sure of his reward.

The fashions are different in the age and land in which we live, but human nature is the same that it was in that distant age and far off land. The man who amasses a great fortune may be sure of the admiration of his fellow men; and that is the reward which most rich men esteem most highly. A man cannot use the income from fifty millions of dollars, but he can enjoy the distinction of being known as the richest and most successful business man in the city. Even the envy of less successful men is one form of admiration, not entirely uncongenial to some. But there is not much of envy, if the successful man is supposed to be honest, and if he is manifestly generous. The ablest lawyer in a community, the most learned teacher in a college, the best scholar in his class, the best athlete in a school are all sure of a sincere and generous admiration. Envy and detraction may contend for a time, but they will retire when the claim is fully established.

Not only is this reward of admiration sure to follow success, but an earnest man is reasonably sure of success in an undertaking to which he gives himself with the devotion with which these Pharisees gave themselves to their ostentatious religion. There are many, indeed, who fail in their effort to gain the prizes

of this world. Many business men go to the wall, while one becomes wealthy, and a few gain a competence. Many politicians are stranded while one secures an office. Some of these failures are due to sickness or misfortune, which could not be foreseen or avoided. But the most of them are due to lack of courage or of devotion to the end sought. The man lost heart when his first venture failed, or he was not watchful when his opportunity came, or he was not diligent when the pressure somewhat slackened. It may be that his failure was due to a virtue rather than a fault. Perhaps conscience forbade some deed which was essential to success. If he met this unflinchingly, and cheerfully paid his price for an unsullied conscience, he is an admirable man; but, for our present contention, he must be counted as one who failed to gain a certain end for want of concentration and devotion to that end. A group of young men offer themselves as candidates for the football team, one is frightened because his heart beats too fast and withdraws; another is indolent and neglects practise; another will not submit to the severe discipline, and these are dropt; still another finds that he cannot rank with the best athletes and the best scholars, and he chooses to be a scholar and surrenders his place in the team. These motives vary in their moral value, but they are all alike in this, that they all show lack of supreme devo-

tion to the end for which a foot-ball team is formed. In any severe contest into which you enter, you may count upon the voluntary failure of a large percentage of those who enter for the struggle: you may therefore, count, with reasonable certainty, upon the success of most of those who are willing to pay the price of success. Doubtless, there were many Pharisees in our Lord's time who would have enjoyed the reputation of unusual sanctity, but some of them preferred to stay at home with their families, others to prosecute their worldly business, still others to minister quietly and unobserved to the poor, so that those, who determine to excel in this effort after a formal sanctity, met with no dangerous competition.

But the principle applies in other beside these more absorbing tasks in life. A man can often have his own way by simply insisting upon it. It is not infrequently true, in associations of men, that one man rules, not because he is the wisest and best man, but because he is "set," he will make others uncomfortable unless they yield to him, and they yield rather than contend. Sometimes one member of a family will take that attitude, and rule the family, not because he has better judgment than the others and convinces them that he is right, but because he has a more obstinate will. Such a person may not be consciously selfish, he may not take more than

his share of good things, and he may be very willing to do his full part. But he feels that he is born to rule, and he secures that upon which he has set his will.

Worse cases may be cited. Many a school boy succeeds in dishonesty. Some are detected and exposed; but everyone knows that these are often, not the worst cases. They are sometimes detected because they are not more than half determined in their dishonesty. The bright boy, who uses all his wits in his effort to deceive his teacher, has a fair chance of success with a faculty made up of scholars and teachers rather than detectives. We say that such students sooner or later come to grief; if they get through school, they are afterwards exposed as cheats or ignoramuses. True, but that does not disprove our argument. They are not seeking success in life, but are simply striving to get through a recitation or a course of study, with as little knowledge as possible, supplemented by as much dishonesty as may be necessary; and in many cases they have their reward, like the hypocrites of old.

I need not illustrate this principle further. I think that we must all see that when Jesus spoke these words, He not only revealed the deep sincerity which characterized all his teaching, but also revealed His insight into the facts of life. It may be well also, for those who preach His gospel, sometimes to

cease to dwell upon the sure failure of sin and selfishness, and to recognize the fact that a self-centered ambition often succeeds in gaining its object. Following our Lord's example, it may be well to go further and to use this very fact as a warning against selfishness and sin, for really, one of the worst things about narrow ambitions and wrong purposes is that they so often succeed.

It is the success of a selfish and wicked man which gives him his chief power for mischief. If sin were as we like to think it is, followed speedily by disasters and penalties, much of its power for evil would be lost. If the proud and hypocritical hearts of those old Pharisees could have been read by all their neighbors as Jesus read them, their power for mischief would have been gone. As it was, they, who aspired to be the religious leaders of their fellow countrymen, were inflicting one of the greatest injuries which can be done to men. They were perverting religion, were making men believe that religion consisted in ceremonial ostentation, and not in love and humility and reverence. The most precious thing in a man is his religious nature, his aspiration after God and holiness. When that most sacred instinct is deceived and perverted, he suffers a worse wrong than when he is robbed of his property, his health, his good name, or even his reason. That is what those pious Pharisees, in the days of Christ, were doing

with those who looked to them for instruction in holiness. Their personal guilt may have been mitigated by the fact that they deceived themselves as well as others, but their evil influence was not reduced by this. They set up a standard of religion which led to the death of their Savior, the ruin of their country and the misery of their countrymen. And their power for evil, I repeat, was in the success of their effort to get the reputation for holiness. Every religious teacher should be awed and humbled and led to test his own convictions and to search his own heart by the evidence that he is meeting with any measure of success. It is success rather than failure, which makes life serious, for it gives power not only to do good, but to do evil, to propagate false doctrine and to decrease the power and pervert the purity of religion.

In departments of thought and action which are not so manifestly religious, the same evil appears. No one can estimate the harm which is done by some successful men of business. I do not now refer to the wrongs which are inflicted upon his customers or his competitors, by an unscrupulous man, but to the harmful influence due to his success. Young business men look upon him with admiration; they adopt his business ideas and methods. Success has almost justified them. It may be true that he has rendered certain services to the community, and that he is en-

dowed with certain attractions and has cultivated certain virtues. His very faults may impress men as virtues. His vigorous selfishness and worldliness, his low standards of honor, his heartless treatment of competitors, his perversions of law, and corruptions of courts form qualities of the ideal business man which ambitious young men take for their model.

Many good citizens are feeling grave anxiety concerning the future political life of our country. This is not due chiefly to the fact that there are bad men in political life, who pervert their offices to selfish ends. The direct harm which a corrupt official or political boss may do is but a small part of the evil which he inflicts. The most serious danger is that his success will lower the national conscience, that the people will learn to endure such evil things, to expect them and to excuse them. Exposing a bad man does not always decrease his influence or wound his feelings. He must be defeated; he must be crusht. Just so long as, in every critical election, the majority vote for him or for his candidates, because he is sound on the tariff or on the currency, just so long his degrading influence will be felt. He may not care to be esteemed a saint, but he does care, above all else, to succeed, not simply that he may gather the direct fruits of success, but that he may, also, secure its indirect but more important fruits

—the influence which comes from success. No man is more impotent than a scoundrel who has failed, while a good man's influence may be quite independent of his success or failure. The pity and danger is that so many bad men succeed. It seems sometimes, as if we could hear the solemn, warning voice of Jesus, saying again, of hard business men, of tricky lawyers, of unscrupulous politicians, "Verily I say unto you, they have their reward," and warning men not to imitate them for this very reason.

But the injury of success in what is wrong is not limited to the influence which the man has over others. Success is the worst thing which can come to the man himself. It injures him in several ways.

It makes him careless concerning his own moral character. We may feel some measure of contempt for a man who goes on in an evil course till he fails and who then repents and turns from his sins. He ought, indeed, to have repented before the misfortune came. But it may be that the repentance is more profound and radical than it could have been before the disaster came. However that may be, a course of sin which brings no disgrace or conscious loss, gains from that very fact a greater power for mischief. The selfish schemer who succeeds congratulates himself when he passes some point of danger without disaster; the dishonest schoolboy breathes

easy when he has escaped detection. But he has reason for grief and not for joy. He has lost an opportunity of seeing himself in his true light. He is like a sick man who has succeeded in concealing his disease from his physician. The only hope for many a man is in the failure of his sin. Jesus' warning is the most serious that can be given to men who are tempted to wrong courses. Do not follow them, not because you are sure to fail in them, but because you may succeed. If you were sure to fail, you might not so much need the warning. Failure might teach you its own blessed lesson, and bring you to just views and to sincere repentance. But you may succeed, and then what can arouse you from your carelessness, or open your blinded eyes, or quicken your deadened conscience?

There is another danger of success, or conversely, another blessing of failure. Success not only blinds us to our true character, but it is also liable to weaken our character; and failure not only reveals us to ourselves, but it tends to make us strong. This is true even when our purposes are right. No man can afford to go through life without the discipline of failure. "Woe unto you, when all men speak well of you." You are losing an essential part of the true discipline of life. A man never knows himself, he cannot be his best self, without the experience of defeat. Can you maintain a just and manly confidence

in yourself, a cheerful spirit, a charitable judgment of others, constancy and diligence, while all goes well with you? Very well: that ought to encourage you about yourself. But the real test does not come until you are criticized and opposed and buffeted and defeated. If you have a weak spot, you are liable to break then. If you are sound all the way through, you will discover it then and reveal it to the world. Count it all joy, when you fall into divers temptations. They prove and make character. It is thus a word of judgment when Jesus says of selfish and unworthy men, "Verily I say unto you, they have their reward." They are denied a part of the inheritance of a child of God, that sharp but gracious discipline which is essential to the attainment of a strong and symmetrical character.

We not only overestimate, but we wrongly estimate the value of success. It is not a sure mark of the favor of God, or of our own wisdom or virtue. This is a world where success is sometimes due to sin, and where it sometimes produces or increases sin; and the most solemn warning may be: Avoid this course lest you prosper in it. Fear success in evil far more than failure. It is the direr penalty, and it may be the proof that God has left you to blindness of spiritual vision and hardness of heart.

SEEBURG

THE TRINITY IN EXPERIENCE

REINHOLD SEEBURG

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THE TRINITY IN EXPERIENCE[1]

THE REV. PROF. REINHOLD SEEBURG

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen."—2 Cor. 13 : 14.

IT was at a point in the course of the world's history at which many paths crossed each other. Three men were standing together and were praising God. One of them was holding bread in his hand. He held it aloft and said: "My God is the Creator and Preserver of all things; He created men and created bread for them, as things were at the beginning so they abide." Another of these men carried aloft a cross. "My God," he said, "is the Redeemer of the world, the cross effaces guilt; since it was set up on Calvary, it brings forgiveness of sins and salvation for all." The third held a book in his hand and spoke as follows: "This book contains God's holy word; whoever heeds it experiences the power of the Holy Ghost which teaches and renews him in a new, strong and good life."

These three men were at variance with each other. Each one thought he was teaching the true God. What he said he considered to be

[1] Translated by Rev. Epiphanius Wilson.

all the other two wished to state, namely, the truth and main principle of knowledge. If a fourth man had joined them there would have been no closing of the dispute about these infinite questions. On reflection he would probably have declared: "Your disputation is idle, for in reality you are all worshiping the same God, the Creator, the Redeemer and the Comforter."

Which of the men was right? The dispute which they carried on has not been settled up to the present moment. Some declare we all know that God is one; others will say of the Son what they say of God; and to a third class of people the power of the Holy Ghost is intended when they talk about God. Which of them is right? Let us think over the notions of these three men and then pass on to the solution of the problem offered by the fourth.

There is one God. He is the Creator and Preserver of the world. By His power He called the world into being and caused it to exist. Through long evolutionary processes, attended with stubborn conflicts and catastrophies the world has gradually assumed a form of greater beauty and variety. But the Spirit that was from the beginning, brooded over it, controlling it, and adjusting it. Who will refuse to praise the great Artificer who planned the mighty whole, and with unerring hand molded it into active life?

And to every single thing the Almighty allotted its special place and a suitable environment. He is the great Provider and the great Breadgiver in the household of nature. He is especially this to us men. He furnishes us with bread and sends us wine also, and He makes our nourishment a thing of joy to us. He opened our eyes to the calm stream of knowledge, so that those who drank of it might experience true delight. He thrust into our hands a scepter by whose power we could make nature bow to our service. We have subdued fire to our will, and even the lightning. We have made a highroad of the liquid ocean and forced the air to propel us on our way. We have invented manifold implements of labor and these we combine in mutual cooperation through our machinery and our workshops.

These and many other things are the gifts of our God. Yes, and the more we come to know the unity of nature, and the operation of her forces and the more steadily our hand comes to wield the scepter that God has given us, so much the greater and more mighty becomes to us the living God, the Lord of heaven and earth. Almighty is He and wise, who gives to everyone all he possesses. We acknowledge that care is taken of us through the love of the Father.

But let us stop to think as we use this word love. The love of God? Can we really em-

ploy such an expression in earnest or merely as one of those dazzling dreams with which men delude themselves amid the terrible experiences of life? Thousands of people in our time would say the latter—tired, sad men, not pessimists by profession, but pessimists from experience. And there are many undeniable facts which they state in support of their opinion.

For who can help perceiving that all the brightness and glory of this world are flooded by a sea of pain and suffering? Imagine that you lived in a flourishing city, seated at the foot of a volcano. A stream of fiery lava deluges the city and reduces to ashes the works of men, and the inhabitants themselves. Why is it that God sends them no assistance in this frightful calamity, and that the voice of their prayers is drowned in the roar of the eruption? In the deep shaft of the mine poisonous gases arise from the ground. Hundreds of men fight there their last fight with gasping breath and straining eyes, they stutter forth their words of prayer, they utter cries for help, but the God of love draws not near to their succor. We enter a hospital. A young child with hectic cheek is talking about the restored health and happiness which God will soon give him. But the physician turns away with a shrug of the shoulders and whispers: "It will be all over to-day."

And as among mankind so it is in the case

of external nature, almost every step we take destroys a life and with unfeeling cruelty one living creature causes the destruction of another. It is easy to accumulate numberless instances. What need to do so since the fact is apparent to all. And so like some venomous serpent ever crawls back to us the hateful and benumbing thought—if there is a God He cannot be a God of love.

We turn to another picture—the Savior with the cross and crown of thorns. Small as is that picture it affects us the more profoundly because it is enframed in the history of the human race. That picture meets the inmost craving of our heart. The Man on the cross bends down to us and lifts us up to Himself. We are folded as it were in the arms of a mother and gaze into the heart of God. Here is the love which we seek, here is the healing for all the pains of life. Thousands express their gratitude for it out of thankful hearts and we will gladly follow their example.

But can we do so? He seems to be so near to us, the Man of sorrows with the sunny heart of love in His bosom. And yet the longer we gaze at Him, the farther He eludes our apprehension, for He is "The Lord." This Jesus was not only the marvelous man with a heart, such as we also have, in Him also lived and operated an eternal mind and an almighty will. He whom we think we can

understand as a brother, is the Lord of mankind and of their history. He is no longer sojourning among us, He has left the earth and from heaven governs the designs and calculations of mankind. He has inaugurated a new history among man; great it is and marvelous. As the mind of a royal master builder sets a thousand hands in motion, and masses millions of stones into firmest masonry, so Christ builds the temple of His Church and reigns as King within her walls.

This is the great Christ, the mighty Lord, and the Judge of mankind. You cannot trifle with Him in sentimental musings upon whose countenance is set the stamp of heavenly majesty, strong and inflexible. Come not with thy darling sins before Him who is environed by the spirit of holiness as by a dazzling light. His mind is ruler and conqueror. The people are raised on high by Him and by Him are cast down to the depths. Thrones are broken to pieces like glass before Him, and by Him the mighty are humbled in the dust. New forms of life, and new ideals through the progress of centuries and cycles are created by the breath of His mouth. He has appeared as conqueror and judge over all the wide fields of the world's history. He is the Lord, as mankind to-day still calls Him, and Him only.

I would that I were by His side as His disciples were, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Could I touch the hem of garments unnoticed;

might I, like that sinful woman, kiss His feet, I would certainly be helped and strengthened. But now He is too great and too pure for me. I should be filled with fear before Him with His eyes " as the sun "; before the might of His hand, which shakes the world; before His feet which leave such deep traces behind them, whenever He moves among mankind. I should be filled with fear before Him, who frees me from the fear of the world. I am never so vividly conscious of my own lost condition as when I stand in the presence of Him who is called the Savior. So vast is His greatness that it accords not with my littleness. Some will tell me that I am exaggerating, for He is only a man as I am. But this is not so, if I measure Him aright, and I should deceive myself were I to belittle Him. And more than this, if what they say is true He could no longer be of help to me. Considering all the pain and care of my soul I require Him to be as great as He actually is, and yet even in this case I can claim but little from Him. My littleness and my darkness enhance by contrast His greatness and His light, but they also prevent me from apprehending and retaining Him. It is no false humility that prompts me to say this; it is the unaffected consciousness of its truth. What then? The Savior of the world cannot be my Savior!

Then they refer me to the book that lies before me. It lies before me and yet it cannot

transport me to heaven. I can hold it in my hand; long and frequently can I peruse it; nothing hinders me from this. And then other people come to me who have tasted of its contents, and with glowing hearts point out to me its words. My heart is touched. I learn to care for the thoughts of the book; then practical life interprets them to me, and men who know me and my needs make more real to me those thoughts. Those thoughts which once were strange and cold to me, seem now to be brought down on a breath of heavenly inspiration.

Great and wonderful are the thoughts of that book. They speak in such plain and vivid language of the Creator of the world, and the Redeemer of mankind with such clearness and life, that they bring God to the threshold of my door, and cause Him to appear at my windows. But this is merely the beginning. My hesitation and doubts still remain the same. When I listen to the words of the book all seems good to me. When I lay it aside the image of the Creator and of the Redeemer vanishes away. The book is like a pedestal which is ever growing more stedfastly fixt in the kingdom of the world. But the figures on the pedestal do not remain standing there; they totter and fall. The sayings of the book warm my heart, but are these sayings actually true? What can the pedestal profit me unless the figures be upon it?

So it seems that the utterances of the three men is of naught avail. Each one exalts his own God but his God can never be mine. Or was the fourth man right? He thinks that he alone has found God, who combines in his definition all that the three said. Let us see if this is indeed the case. We have to consider not only the apprehension but with the comprehension of something living and actual. We next turn to the book and the book refers us first to Christ, then to the Father. The path rises from the lower to the higher. Can this be the right way? From the book and our experience of mankind, with the Holy Spirit in our hearts, to the Lord on the cross, who has power over human souls—this is the path we will pursue.

"The communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all"—so speaks the apostle? What is this communion?

A mean and quiet room lies before our eyes. There a poor woman is seated reading the Bible to her child. All is quiet in that room while the woman with a look of rapt devotion, as if she saw something vast and marvelous, repeats the words of the text to the child. Two friends are sitting together. They are conversing about the loftiest subjects and questionings are put away and doubt is silenced, and they feel the presence of a living Spirit that stirs their hearts. In a church the old verities of the Bible are being preached,

and the listeners forget the preacher, and the great subject penetrates the hearts of all present and unites all in one mind.

What is it that in these cases moves the heart and brings to it new ideas and new aims? It is not the conclusions of logic, nor forcible reasonings, nor newly discovered law, nor vivid representation of advantage or disadvantage. It is the power of the Holy Spirit which brings to the heart the knowledge of new realities. The spirit of a higher life takes possession of our life. But the power of this spiritual life points to a will. And a will from on high takes control of us, a will strong and irresistible. This is the first result which we experience after reading God's word; we are mastered by another will. While we are thus mastered we begin to exert our own will. We seek for God, not because we feel that we ourselves can find Him, but because we perceive that we are being sought for by Him.

This is the beginning and the foundation of communion with God. From the life that goes on around us, and the words men say to us a certain will springs forth, and this will holds and shackles us; it wishes to control us. A holier Will or Spirit from on high moves us and excites us while we are listening to the words and uttered thoughts of men. And all these words and thoughts of men have but one object: The world asserts its claim upon me.

And still men listen so frequently to this

worldly voice, and so seldom is their heart moved by the Spirit. How does this happen? It is not to be attributed to the natural order of things; the fault lies with ourselves. There is a horrible game of trifling going on in our days. People trifle with God. Interesting spiritual thoughts about God and His works are indulged in as a pastime, when men have had enough of the serious work and activity of life. First comes eating and drinking, labor and amusement. First work, then play, and God has a place in the play of fancy and meditation. But God is active and the activity and work of the Holy Spirit do not manifest themselves in play. They only manifest themselves in what is activity—in the earnest, strenuous and simple sense. But how many of us defeat this active working of the Holy Spirit by clever sophisms or misleading paradoxes, which occur to us as soon as ever we begin to ponder over the idea of a God! But it is not from our minds that such thoughts arise, but from our impressions of actual life. Yet it is only when we suffer ourselves to be thus imprest by the world of actuality, that such impressions can prevail over us. While people talk about God, they have Him not. They dispute about God as a concept, to be grasped by the mind, but they fail to grasp God. The talk of these " cultured " people is like a firework in the night. It crackles and sparkles, but it soon dies away in dimness,

darkness and evil stench. The firework is not the fire that warms and lights up a room. If you would have the fire from on high, give up the idle thoughts, the vanity of thy imaginings, be quiet and thoughtful and lowly in heart, and ever ready to receive the gift and to submit yourself. Frivolity is the death foe of religion, for it is no more than inflated nothingness, show without substance. But religion is actuality and produces actuality—something really existing in the quiet heart, altho it appears not in the sight of man. Away then with this idle playing at religion, with these inflated expressions and these artificial distinctions. Our souls are hungering for realities; for they are empty and of themselves contain nothing. Therefore we should accept the impressions which the Holy Spirit makes upon us, and the actualities which come to us in a stream from on high we should make our own.

Happy that soul which keeps quiet, if, from the living world around it, the will of God bursts upon its recognition. The Holy Spirit encompasses it, and grants it communion with another world. It discovers that reality which human eyes discern not, and which fills the heart. Meanwhile from out of its daily environment a mighty hand is stretched out and clasps the soul. And the soul rests in this hand, feels itself subdued and yet raised above the whole world, feels itself animated

by another will and yet for the first time happy in its freedom. It has gained communion with the Holy Spirit.

But now that our souls have become aware of the strength of the present world, let them break away with redoubled force from all the questionings and deficiencies which we children of earth and wretched sinners are conscious of. We all possess that force; and with many among us it might fitly be sprinkled with the deep ashes of resignation. It profits nothing, methink, to question and to seek. Naught is to be discovered by earthly means, and the portals of another world are irrevocably closed. But now the portals have been opened and the fragrant breath of holiness and the light of bliss streams forth from them, and the questionings and the needs which seemed so crushing a load, pass away forever.

What our souls wish and long for is in the last analysis twofold. Our knowledge hinders our progress if we load ourselves with guilt. As soon as the breath of the Spirit sweeps over us we become profoundly conscious of it, and we wish to become good to others, so that at last we earnestly apply ourselves to goodness. What was once merely dark compulsion now, for the first time, becomes in us under that new breath of warm life, the very thing we desire. Our will associates itself with goodness, and yet there is conflict be-

tween them. What help can we find in such a dilemma? We need reliable and genuine encouragement, and we crave constant inflexible strength. That is all. And so the soul longs at the break of the new day to become stronger and more strenuous than it has been in the dreams of the night. Who forgives the bad and who gives us the good? That is what we need.

Then sounds in our ears the words "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Grace" —that is it. The Lord of the human race is Christ, and His power shall bring salvation. And now the Man on the cross, whose will has guided the history of mankind, has made certain that we can be forgiven, and He has power to make me good, so that our union becomes certain. The longing of my soul drives me into His presence and now at last has become so strong that I fling away all fear, and cling to Him.

And then a new thing takes place. The will which moves the history of the world, is moving my soul, and the profoundest vital element of history is now contained in my soul. Christ has conquered me as He has conquered all things. I am become a new creature through Christ the Lord. His almighty and loving will creates a new, a sanctified race of men, who are comprised in His Church. His will introduces me to this congregation of the sanctified. Holy are they. While I may not

deny their guilt and naughtiness, in spite of that, they have been brought in harmony with the converting and sanctifying power of His will. Holy are they in that they have received forgiveness and a new life. Into this congregation I, also, by the Spirit that worketh in it, was admitted and by this means I came under the influence of Christ. And I was thereby assured that my sins were forgiven and that Christ had poured out upon me a new life.

The Holy Spirit leads us to Christ. What the Spirit says to us so that we may feel the reality of it is, that Christ had made our soul His own. And this ownership is so stedfastly anchored that no tide of doubt can ever wash it away. Jesus, that Man of holiness, died for us and His faith in suffering made Him a hill of refuge for us. This fact ratifies the forgiveness of our sins. And Christ the heavenly Lord and God, whose almighty compassion changes sinful mankind into a people of God, is become my Lord also. Deep in the foundation of all history, according to His ever gracious desire, are buried the roots from which spring the principles of my life and yield to me ever new strength, and ever new efforts after goodness. At this moment I am convinced that the cravings of my soul have been satisfied. I, the guilt-laden sinner, feel certain that there is such a thing as forgiveness of sins, and that a new life is actually

begun in Christ. What the Spirit leads me to discover is the reality of Christ. What I had taken to be a purely personal conception, is a fact of the world's history. The supremacy of Christ is the salvation of the world, as it is my salvation.

And again occurs the question: Why do so many shun the way to Christ, why do they suffer Him to pass them by without approaching Him? What the dream of their soul desires, that He possesses; what their inmost being longs for, that He gives. They were created for Him, they belong to Him, the Lord of the world's history. Why do they not come to Him?

There prevails in these our days a great longing for forgiveness and purity. Why do not men come to Him who has fulfilled all history by His forgiveness and His purity of life? It is therefore no dream of the night, no fancy of an overwrought soul: it is actuality in the clear light of history. He has it and you need it, wherefore not approach Him? Yes, wherefore not? There is a disposition in men's minds to explain away the actual presence of the Holy Spirit in the congregation, and falsely to consider that they have no need of Christ. And there are many imitations, so many adulterated foods which in our time are sought for instead of Christ the Bread of life, so many substitutes such as margarine, watered milk, bran-bread!

Alas, how many men in our days provide for their soul a thoroughly unwholesome diet! Hunger and thirst after righteousness cannot be experienced by them. In the deepest foundations of their inner life nothing abides but show, frivolty and make-believe. They are like those slatternly housewives who the whole day long are nibbling dainties and at dinner cannot eat any regular meal. Here and there a bit of esthetics, then a mouthful of poetry, here a dusting of Schopenhauerian pessimism, now a drop of Nietzsche's superhumanism, and a bonbon of benevolence or a lemonade of sensational reading—in the name of God, who can fill Himself with these things and yet maintain his breath? They who live in this way and perhaps are proud of their cosmopolitan way of living, how can they express any surprise that they are neither really hungry nor really satisfied?

Hunger and thirst after righteousness! Oh, there is something irresistible about this hunger and thirst, for the whole soul feels its emptiness, and turns away from the world with its plausible opinions and hastens towards God, to find its satisfaction there. It has the hunger for God and with God alone would it be filled. And we? For us God is too great, too all-embracing, too real! When the great hunger of the soul is aroused every means is resorted to, not to attain to grace, but to allay that hunger through the instrumen-

tality of grace. And we have so many little means and methods ready that we think we shall be able to dispense with that old fashioned grace of which we hear. When we are inwardly perplexed and tormented and our immortal soul is straining after God, we are likely to fall into a mood that seeks distractions, or to go through a curative course, or to dawdle away our time in sentimentalities, or perhaps to buy "a serious book," and set it in the bookshelf, to talk no more about the gross, or at least, the grossest pleasures of life.

And beyond is standing the great Christ and around Him a multitude—many from our own people—who became strong, free, joyful and happy through their Christ—in all stations, in all classes, in all times. There are men whose hunger was great, but who were filled, there are actual people who struggled with real obstacles and lived a real life, through the power and grace of Christ. And we, would we any longer live for show and frivolous trifles, would we any longer bend our back double before the idols of the day, would we any longer bring up our children to dwarf the soul, and to think nothing great except talk? No! God help us all, that better things than these may be found in our homes and in our hearts! But there will be nothing better unless we are on the alert. Let us follow the promptings of our hungering soul.

Back to Christ! it cries to us, back to the great Christ of our Father! In this path life is flourishing and strength stands rooted. Herein is the holy hunger after righteousness and herein is a joyful, strong and happy, because a real life is to be found. We would live—live—all men cry out for life, and Christ is the way to life, and He is life eternal. And when we have found in Christ the life of our soul, then we reach the last stage of advancement. This is faith in the "love of God" the Father. He who has experienced the reality of the living God, while the communion of the Holy Spirit encompasses him, and Christ the Lord has allayed the inmost cravings of his soul, God's love to him is no mere assumption, no empty possibility—no, it is an experiential reality. But to what special point shall we direct our gaze, as we think upon this love of the Father? When an individual man speaks to another and by his words the will of God moves the hearer, we call this the power of the Holy Spirit. When we feel the love of God in action, which built the structure of history and will build the Church, we then speak of Christ the Lord. But beyond the race of men who in mutual cooperation live around us and of history which conducts and guides our spiritual life, there rises before us a wider realm of existence, which environs our whole life, and that is nature. God acts upon us through the in-

strumentality of men, who in the present world enter into communication with us, and He acts in the events of history also, must not His will also operate upon us through nature? The stage of human history is our earth, but nature is not limited to the earth, its stage is the whole vast universe. God dominates the universe and His will animates all nature and guides it to its goal. This is the last thing which the soul experiences in its relations with God.

The love of the Father prevails throughout the wide world in its various relations. How often has it been said and deeply pondered that the love of God can be read in the twinkling stars. But this is not the case. It is only when we have known love in Christ, love that moves the heart of men, that our heart comes to understand what love is. And we see with fresh clearness all the gifts and powers of nature which the Creator gives and upholds whereby to fill His creatures with joy and happiness. How many pure joys, how many exquisite raptures, how many moments of deep tranquillity are inspired by the universal harmony of nature through the good things that are showered upon us and the knowledge and the power which they disclose. And how quickly do all these emotions blend in a glorious and peaceful unity with the deep feeling inspired by Christ. We Christians are by no means dissociated from the natural life, as

tho it were a pit of darkness. No, for many times we are made conscious that the life of those who have won Christ, becomes a new gift, by which it is completed and its joy fulfilled. He who values the world in accordance with the will of Christ, for him it gains a thousand fold in power and beauty.

And now nature effervesces and palpitates with life and we all are enrapt within her wide circumference and it is we whom the whole combination as by an electric shock is stirring. The eternal will of love, which made everything good in the beginning, would rouse our curiosity over the play of nature's forces and her condition of universal activity. This is the will of our loving Father. Whether the sun rises or sets, whether seed time and harvest come and go, whether new forces in nature are discovered or whether in the changing experiences of the human race a man is born, or after the satisfaction of life departs hence, whether hunger is allayed or sweet mysterious love stirs in our soul its deepest springs—it is all due to Him. And in deep gratitude the soul recognizes the love of the Omnipotent. " In Him we live and move and have our being " for " He is not far from any one of us."

O world, how changed is thine appearance! Thou art from God. No longer dost thou seem to us a place sinister and evil like a gigantic antediluvian monster. No, from thee

the loving eye of the Almighty beams upon us and His hand stretches out and moves in all thy powers. O world, thou art my Father's world, thou art my cradle and my ship of passage, my storehouse and my chamber, my house and my estate.

And I see that in the whole of my life and in all the world and in all nature and in every people there are many more good and kindly things to be met with than difficulties and acts of violence, much more joy and happiness than pain and sorrow. Here it is that the Father exercises His dominion, leading us and training us up with tenderness. If I count up the sum of my life my hands are folded in gratitude, for the Father hath done all things well.

It is true that He only comes to the Father who has found the Son. He alone whose soul the spiritual lordship of Christ dominates can realize the eternal love which reigns in nature. He alone who turns the eye of his soul to the light of Christ sees the mystery of that love in the order and arrangement of nature's life. The gracious purpose of Jesus Christ which moves in history brings our hearts into harmony with the loving will of the Father, who controls the universe. Dark are the riddles that we cannot answer. Such are poverty and misfortune, the inexorable rule of natural law, and the uncontrollable course of natural events. No intellect can outwit them and no

will of man can master them. But in spite of all abides still constant the conviction of our hearts that almighty love encircles us. " The eternal God is thy refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms "; is the motto to which faith responds. Love is over us and love is underneath us. Whither can we then be swept away out of the influence of that love? And to what depths can we fall without falling into the arms of that eternal love? As the Father is in all things so we are in Him and when in death our souls like a seed of corn fall into the ground of the universe, whither can we go without finding the love of the Father there?

O eternal, all prevailing, omnipresent love, I thank thee that I have found thee in that thou makest me to rejoice in life, whether I live or die, for I am in thy kindly hand from my first moment up to the opening of eternity! And yet there is many a man among us who desires to know nothing of this great and all-embracing love. He deceives himself for he will not see it. His heart is like a sieve, what it receives drips through and leaves it empty. The unthankful man has a heart like a sieve and like a crooked and withered hand. There is nothing it can seize, hold and retain possession of. We are unthankful to one another from childhood and we are unthankful to God up to old age. Unthankfulness makes us poor, poor as beggars, unthankfulness

makes us godless and wretched. Take merely this example. How fluent every tongue among us becomes when the subject is the evil and suffering of life, the adversity and endurance of wrong which people live through. And how reserved and curt are the terms in which the good gifts of God are enumerated. Unless our selfish vanity prompted us through which certain gifts of God to us were noised abroad, it might almost be believed that all that God has made is worthless. There are even some men in whose opinion God and His Providence are always unjust.

But there is nothing which is punished so surely and so terribly as ingratitude. Ingratitude never attains to an inner and permanent possession of anything. Even if ingratitude has the best and the finest things, the most intrinsically and profoundly precious things to us, all is outward, all is show, because such gifts have not entered the heart. And thus the ungrateful man can acquire all the good gifts of God and yet have nothing. He has the fruit, but he does not perceive the tree; he acquires God's gifts but he is blind to God the giver. His heart is a sieve and sieves are always empty. In our ingratitude we refuse to have God, we remain empty hearted for we remain Godless. The love of God so moves the heart that we become grateful, and in such gratitude we taste and feel that the love from above gives and supports our life.

This is the source of joy and peace, of courage and action in our life; who of us would not desire to attain to this?

We find, as we turn our glance backward, that we have traveled a long way. The man who is humble and serene feels the working and the nearness of God because in the word and thought which his environment reveals to him the will of the Holy one supports him. The soul in which the hunger after holiness prevails receives from Christ the Lord the consciousness of grace in the sense of pardon and power. And to the grateful mind the love of God the Father is made known in the very existence of nature and in the processes and progress of his own life.

Threefold is the tie which connects us with the world around us. There are certain men who are our personal associates; there is the combined force of historical lives, to whose influence we are subjected, and there is the natural harmony of the universe which claims our attention. Any further connections between us and our world does not exist. And it is on this point that we see the predominance of the everlasting love which makes these threefold ties the means through which its activity is ordered. The contemporaries who surround me and are best acquainted with the need of my soul, talk to me of God, according to my needs and understanding, and the Holy Ghost works in their words and

through Him can I perceive the truth; God lays claim to me. And as I perceive this I am led forward into a world-embracing historic stream of activity, which is the life of Christ's Church and in it I discover the fact: God lays claim to the Church. But all history is restricted by the conditions which nature imposes. The more I learn to discern the energy of life which God has put forth in history, so much more am I convinced that God created the harmony in nature. God lays claim to the world.

And this harmonious union of our life with the world implies a harmonious union of our life with God. In these double connections the triune God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—operates on our individual soul. Whoever understands this, knows also what vital truth is the ground of belief in the triune God, and why any weakening of this belief makes us poorer by blinding us to a phase of God's working in our life. We believe in the living God because we experience His power and His love through His living and encompassing operation upon us. But love implies will and will implies personality. God as the Holy Spirit desires each individual of us; God as the Son desires the congregation of the redeemed; God as the Father desires the strength and life and happiness of the world. In this threefold will we recognize Him as threefold in will and threefold in person.

And yet there is still but one God, who is love, whom we learn to see in the vast realm of being, interwoven with our own life.

It is all simple and clear. We have not to do with a part of God; God has no parts, for He is an indivisible person, and a love that embraces the whole world. And again, when God leads us as the Holy Spirit to the Son and when we feel that the love of the Son, as revealed in history, encompasses us, and when the Son leads us to the Father and we feel that God's loving goodwill belongs to us, that long goodness that suffuses the universe, then we experience the entire Godhead with its undivided love. It is simple because we can experience it, children are conscious of it, and it is shared by the wretched and the poor in its whole and undiminished fulness. And then again difficult questions arise which tower above the heavens and go deeper than the deepest depth of the intellect. The most powerful intellects have but the power to utter stammering words, and the more such things occupy our thoughts so much the more puzzling becomes the riddle. The one God is the triune God. And the wonder of it is, that anyone can experience it, but no man can grasp it with his mind and distinctly express it with his tongue. It is as with life, and as with love, which everyone has and no man can explain. And more than this, for it is itself both life and love. Before that which is at once the

source and object of our life and love, we stand encompassed and maintained.

This is the holy Trinity as it is in our life and as it operates on our life. We wish to know it experientially and we can know it experientially. Experiential knowledge would produce in us greater and holier wisdom from which, in which, and for which we would live.

SELBIE

THE NEW COVENANT

WILLIAM BOOTHBY SELBIE

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THE NEW COVENANT

PRIN. W. B. SELBIE, D.D.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."—Jer. 31: 31-34.

HERE is the message of a new time, the message of brightest hope and of fullest regeneration in the whole of the Old Testament. This promise of hope our Lord laid hold of as He approached His hour of darkest trial. He held it before the eyes of His disciples when the dread hour of parting from him weighed like a nightmare upon their souls. He planted it at the heart of the sacrament of life and of death which he sent down the Christian ages to bear His remem-

brance before the eyes of men; "This cup is the new covenant in my blood."

It is the message of a new time for every age and for every soul. It awakens in man's soul the consciousness that he is the master and not the slave of years and centuries. To the old and weary it holds out the promise of newness. He ceases to move mechanically from day to day, allowing the custom and circumstance of the times and period to decide his action and determine his fate, it reveals to him that he is a son of eternity as well as a child of time. He stands above the flow of time, guides its course, determines its character, and gives it an ever new content of worth and meaning out of his own eternal spirit. He looks before and after, and learns that his mastery of the future has not been forfeited to the debts and bonds of the past. He finds that in repentance and forgiveness he may even recover the lordship of the past, and the future opens up before him as a broad heritage upon which he may enter and where he may reign as monarch of the morning and springtide.

How natural to every man is the longing for newness and freshness! It often appears as mere trivial curiosity or superficial love of novelty, but even these are strong intimations of the hope revealed in the new covenant. More solemn and serious are the ever-recurring new vows, new resolves, new

promises, which men make in critical and crucial hours and events of their lives, and tho the vows and promises be often broken, and great resolves come to naught, so long as a spark of humanity glows in the soul, man, feeling his mastery over time, renews his hopes, his vows and his covenants. But the justification and power of every new hope, of every regeneration, lie only in the broad principles of the message of the new covenant.

The first and most important fact about the new covenant is that it is God that makes it; "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant." This is the fundamental religious idea in the Old Testament, and indeed in all religion. Behind every law and ordinance and promise of the Old Testament lies the covenant relation between Jehovah and His people. It is proclaimed with fresh emphasis and with a new wealth of gracious meaning by Jeremiah, but it was implied and often exprest in God's dealing with Adam, with Noah, with Abraham, with Moses, with Saul and with David. It means that Jehovah of His own free will and loving kindness began a friendship with these men, that He graciously condescended to enter into a bond of mutual fellowship and faithfulness with His people. We are not to think of this covenant as a bargain or agreement between equals, but as the offering of gracious terms by the absolute Sovereign, by

which, however, He bound Himself in mutual compact with the true Israelites, who received the covenant. The present colloquial usage of the term "covenant" is apt to lead the mind into the market-place, when two parties meet, each having something which the other needs. One man has corn and the other has money, and the man who has corn needs money and the man who has money needs corn. They each make an offer, and improve their offers until they have found common terms upon which they agree, strike the bargain and make the covenant. But God's covenant with man is not of this kind; there is no market-place wherein we can stand to make terms with God, nor have we any price that He needs us to offer Him. The Hebrew figure of speech which expresses God's covenant relation with man is derived from a different and an older custom of life—from the battlefield. The picture at the back of the figure is that of the victorious leader, after the battle. He passes over the field of conquest and finds his enemy lying at his feet, beaten, wounded, helpless, and he does not now draw the hostile sword to kill, but bends down to the stricken man, takes him by the hand, sets him on his feet, restores to him life, friendship and hope, and of his free power bestows upon him again the territory, the throne, the crown he had lost. It is so that God finds men, poor, helpless, lying in sin and ruin, and out of his free grace He

sets him upon his feet, and bestows upon him the friendship of God and all the hope, joy and riches involved in that. Such is God's new covenant; it is the truth exprest in more technical terms by Paul in his doctrine of justification by faith; it is the truth exprest in language at once more intimate and universal in our Lord's doctrine of the divine fatherhood. God begins the new relation, and all it involves. In Him is the fountain of all new beginnings and out of Him proceeds the binding force of all new covenants. The making of new covenants, the formation of new characters, the acquisition of new powers and riches of life is therefore not so much a matter for us to make new resolves, new vows, new promises, as it is for us to allow God to make the terms of his covenant with our souls. And here is man's hope, the hope for every man, even the man who has often promised, often determined to reform, to rise higher, and who has failed as often. Broken resolutions, the bondage of old habit, and the despair of failure may weigh heavily on his soul; he may have said, "I have tried so often to overcome the same temptation, I have so many times vowed to renounce my besetting sin, but all the vows are broken, and I dare not try again." But there is still one way, an infallible way, the only way—to open wide the gates of the soul, to let God come in to make His own covenant with man.

The next feature of the new covenant is that it becomes for man a covenant of inward principle as distinguished from one of outward rules; "Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt,"—not like the mosaic covenant of laws and ordinances, "but this is the covenant. . . . I will put my law in their inward parts and in their hearts will I write it." For the child it is good that he should live by rules which he has neither assimilated nor understood, under commands which derive their authority from the knowledge and experience of others who have lived them, but that is not good for the man, because character, moral worth and spiritual strength are only acquired to the extent that virtue and holiness have become spontaneous forces within the soul. There may be a kind of prudence and safety in keeping within the boundaries laid down by law and custom, without knowing or feeling anything of their inner authority, but that is a weak and poor life to live, with no freshness, no growth, no springtide to it, and one easily disturbed by the fascinations of temptation and the storms of passion. But such is not the life of the people of the covenant. God works from within outward; He establishes the fortress of the soul on the foundations of His ever present love, He binds man to Himself in

bonds of never-ceasing friendship and faithfulness that become for man principles of life and conduct, convictions of mind and heart that form the very fiber of the soul's being. The life of the covenant is not a constant effort, an uncertain endeavor to observe more minutely the rules of good conduct, or to keep more faithfully the laws of acknowledged morality, but it is the free outflow in life and conduct of the work of God in the heart within; it is not the painful and regular practise of the bondage of an established law, but the practise of submission to the working of God upon the springs of conduct. Moral progress and growth of the soul are to make inward and subjective those objective ideals and realities of truth, beauty and goodness revealed in God while He impresses His covenant ever deeper upon the human spirit. The morality of the covenant is not something to be adopted and assumed each time we act, and to be neglected when we dwell in repose, but it is in us, as the breath of life in the body, even the power and spirit urging and determining our every act.

From this follows a third feature of the new covenant, that it establishes between God and man a relation of mutual possession as distinguished from mutual obligation; "and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Law enforces obligations—of man to obey God, and of God to reward or punish

man according to his deserts. Such was the relation between God and man conceived under the old legal covenant, now to be superseded. But the new covenant creates a deeper relation. First, God is ours; He not merely undertakes to do this and that for us, but He binds Himself to be ours in all that He is; all His resources and powers are pledged to the service of our salvation. This is the invincible, irresistible might of the new covenant. The power and enthusiasm of Puritanism was derived from its Calvinistic doctrine of predestination and election, for whatever defects in form may have pertained to that doctrine, it meant to them at least that God had given Himself to His people so that He was irrevocably pledged to save them and make them victorious.

And then, we are God's—His own, His property. We are bound, if we accept the covenant bond, not merely to fulfil this or that duty, to keep a number of covenants, perform a number of services, but to give Him ourselves, all that we are, nay more, all that we can be. We make not merely a passive surrender, but give Him our best selves. And this is the place for man's activity to give to God the largest possession possible of himself. By vows and covenants of his own he will not save his soul, but there are fitting responses to the covenant which God makes with us, so that when He has given Himself to us,

we shall not be sparing, and shall never cease giving ourselves to Him.

And this mutual possession of one another by living spirits, as God and man are, involves one deeper and greater relation yet, the final feature of the new covenant; it is a covenant of intimate personal communion as distinguished from one of mediation. "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me." This is the climax of the new covenant; it contains and creates all that has gone before.

The old covenant of the law had been given by the mediator of men and of angels; and it was itself rather a medium of separation than a bond of union between God and man. Its institutions likewise, the priesthood and the sacrifices rather stood between man and God than brought man to God. But all this belongs to an elementary stage of revelation, fitted for the shy childhood of the race. It obscures the true attitude of God to man, conceals His grace and mercy, and represents Him as a remote avenging Deity, only to be propitiated by the acts of a priestly order which therefore will stand to man as more gracious and powerful than God Himself. But the revelation of the new covenant rends the veil, scatters the clouds, and removes out of the way all mediating agencies, for in it, God Himself comes to man in such a way that

they may have personal knowledge of one another. The only mediator of the new covenant is God Himself in Jesus Christ who comes to all in form and manner so near and so intimate that man can receive Him, know Him and hold converse of spirit with Him. In this intimate friendship with God, iniquity is forgiven and sin is forgotten, so that man may know all the freshness, sweetness and joy of the new life which God makes for him and forms within him, by giving Himself unto him in the loving bonds of unfailing friendship and communion.